AROUND THE CAMP FIRE WITH THE OLDER BOYS

MARGARET W. EGGLESTON



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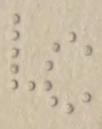
MARGARET W. EGGLESTON

AROUND THE CAMP FIRE WITH THE OLDER BOYS

BY

MARGARET W. EGGLESTON

Author of "Fireside Stories for Girls in their Teens," "The Use of the Story in Religious Education," etc.



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TO

HENRY AND JAMES

TWO OF MY "OLDER BOYS"

THIS BOOK IS DEDICATED BECAUSE
OF THEIR GREAT LOVE FOR HEARING
AND THEN RETELLING THE BEST OF STORIES

PREFACE

Would you make a list of the great men who have been a source of power and strength to the nations of the world! In the list you will find warriors and leaders, kings and peasants, poets and musicians. And among the greatest of the men you will find the story-tellers. In the days of the nomads, the two who were accounted greatest were the chief and the story-teller. In the ancient world, he was given a place of honor in the life of the people. Among the Hebrews, there came the world's greatest story-teller—Jesus, the Christ.

Always the story-teller has been a chosen vessel to carry the best that there was in history and literature and romance; and because he carried the best and gave unstintingly, he has been an important character in the world's history. Many of our greatest authors and teachers have been story-tellers. Many of our greatest men have been influenced by story-telling mothers and fathers. And still the story lives and works in the lives of the people of today.

In this tmie of stress and strife following the Great War, there is need of an army of story-tellers. The ideals of the nation have been lowered in many ways and those who are to make up the strength of the nation in the days that are ahead are in the groups of boys and girls who are in our schools, our Camp-

fire and Scout troops. They are also in the great mass of boys and girls who walk the streets and frequent the cheap amusements because they have nothing else to do. They are eager for stories—watch them flock to the moving-picture shows to see a story if you wish proof of this fact.

In every High School, in every community club, in every boys' club of whatever name, in every girls' club in our land, in every church and every home, there is need of the story-teller to help to conserve the best that we can find in the literature and life of yesterday and today.

And for what do these older boys and girls seek? They seek a way; they seek the truth; they seek a life that is rich and abundant. They seek a hero, a mate, a living and a home.

And who shall the hero be? A train robber or a great soul? Who shall the mate be? A girl who has the lowest or the highest ideals in her life? And what sort of a living shall they make? One judged by the ideals of men or of God? And what kind of a home shall they make? One that sends out into the world great men and women or one that has its end in the divorce court? Who shall guide them in this great search?

So much depends on whose stories they learn to love. Those of the street, those of the cheap story book, those of the careless mind—or those of the great masters of literature, those of the real teacher, those of the Scout Master who to them is like a big brother.

Our boys are waiting for our leaders to show them

the way to the abundant life. They are waiting for them to place in their minds ideals that shall drive out the less noble ones and create the desire for the good and true.

To be a great Scout leader or a leader of a boys' class is a wonderful opportunity. To be a teacher plus a story-teller is to double one's power for helping and keeping the boys.

The vow of the men of the Round Table still is full of meaning for those who would study stories needed by the older boys:

"To reverence the king, as if he were
Their conscience, and their conscience as their king;
To break the heathen and uphold the Christ;
To ride abroad redressing human wrongs;
To speak no slander, no, nor listen to it;
To honor his own word as if his God's;
To lead sweet lives in purest chastity;
To love one maiden only, cleave to her,
And worship her by years of noble deeds."

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AROUND THE CAMP FIRE WITH THE OLDER BOYS

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TONY'S SACRIFICE

DOWN in one of the alleys in the north end of Brooklyn there lived a boy named Tony. His father was a ditch-digger. His mother was a wash-woman, and his only sister was cash-girl in a big department store.

Even Tony had to help to earn the living for the family, for he was almost fourteen years of age, so he blacked shoes and sold newspapers and then went to school when no work was to be done. Soon he could have his working papers, and Tony thought often of the day when they should come.

Did he want them? Indeed he did not. Tony loved the school teacher who had been so kind to him and so often gave him parts of her dainty lunch. He liked the sunshiny room and the clean floor. He liked the stories that Miss Gray told almost every day. No, Tony was in no hurry to have the papers come.

His home was on the sixth floor of a tenement, and it wasn't a very beautiful home. Mother had so much to do that she couldn't keep it clean. Father drank

often and much, so there was no money to spend in making it cozy. Sister wasn't often to be found at home, for she liked better to spend her evenings on the street. So, of course, Tony didn't care much about home.

But he did care very much about the back yard of his home. Why? Because there, in a drygoods box, lived Bobs, his yellow dog. Now Bobs was only a mongrel dog—just a street waif about whom no one cared until he was adopted by Tony. But now he knew that he was the finest dog in the world. Tony had said so, and Tony knew.

It had been a case of love at first sight between the boy and the dog. Bobs had licked the heel of Tony's foot one day because he wanted a bit of the big sandwich that Tony was eating. So the boy and the dog had sat down together on a doorstep and shared the lunch. Since that day the love had grown steadily until finally they were always together when they could possibly be. For Bobs was the only thing in the whole world that showed love for the lonely Tony.

It was a beautiful day, late in October, when Tony read in the morning paper that a dog-tax was about to be levied on all town dogs, and that any caught without a tag would be taken away. Oh, oh, how fast his heart thumped as he read it! What could he do? He had no money, yet he must protect Bobs.

All night long Tony tossed and tumbled. Plans came into his mind that might do—but each would give him so little money. He would help at the restaurant;

he would carry bundles; he would even run errands for the ugly woman down the street. Bobs must have a tag.

So while Bobs pulled at his chain in the back yard, Tony worked to earn the money and the days passed by. Every night, when it grew so dark that no one could see him, he went down by the old box-house and, with Bobs in his lap, snuggling as close to Tony as ever he could, he counted the precious nickels and dimes. One dollar—two dollars—two dollars and fifty cents—and finally there was the whole of the three dollars needed for the tax.

Then, with a glad heart, he took the homely yellow dog that was so beautiful to him and started for the collector's office. Down the long street, up to the city hall, and then across the street again he went. Bobs was very heavy, yet he dared not let him down. An officer might take him away if he were running on the street.

The street was full of moving vehicles but Tony didn't mind. He was used to dodging here and there as he sold his papers. So he hurried along. Then suddenly he saw something that made him rush forward with a scream. An old lady had stepped from behind a carriage right in front of a swift automobile.

Quickly he grasped her arm and tried to pull her aside. It only took a second, but in that second Tony was struck by the automobile and Bobs, whom he was holding under his arm, was badly bruised. Quickly passers-by carried them all to the curbing—the old lady

faint but only very much frightened, Tony with the broken body, and the bloody little yellow dog.

Down on the grass they laid the boy. How his head ached! How his left leg was hurting! Where were they taking him? Everyone was so far away. Suppose they should leave him all alone!

Suddenly he heard someone say:

"'Tis a quick matter to shoot the dog when once the policeman gets here. I wish he would hurry, for he is bound to get near to the boy."

Then Tony remembered. Bobs was there, and Bobs must be hurt. He tried to lift his hand to motion to someone, but it would not lift. He tried to call to someone, but his voice sounded far away and no one heard. He struggled to make someone see, but no one looked his way except a little yellow dog. It saw, and, with a howl of pain, it sprang across the curbing, snarling and growling at those who would keep it back.

It pushed its way close to the boy. It licked Tony's face. It pulled at his clothes. Then it crept very, very close inside the thin, ragged coat. Just a tiny bit the hand of the boy moved, but it covered a tiny bit of the dog, and both were content.

When the ambulance came, Big Tim, the policeman, looked at the two. Then a tear rolled down his brown cheek as he said:

"Maybe it is the best friend the little feller ever had. We will take him along and, while the doctors help the boy, I'll help the dog. Any boy who loves a dog is worth while saving. Hurry along."

So while the doctors bandaged the boy, Bobs was bandaged by big Tim until he was more bandage than dog. He growled at all others, but Tim could do with him what he would and they spent many hours together. He would be a sorry-looking dog, Tim knew, when once he was well again, but, at least, he would be alive for Tony.

Many days later, a boy who looked as if he were eleven but who really was almost fifteen opened his eyes in the ward of a big hospital. The fever was gone and he had been thinking for a long time. So when the nurse came to give him his morning wash he began to ask questions. How had he been hurt? Where was his dog? But no one knew a thing about the thing he most wanted to know. No yellow dog had been brought to the hospital; no one had heard that one had been killed.

So he lay there white and sad, not even interested to know that a big policeman had come to inquire for him every day and was wanting to see him. Probably he was going to scold him for making so much trouble. Could you have been very close to him, you would have heard him saying over and over:

"My Bobs! My little Bobs! How I wish I could have you back! You were always so good to me, Bobsy. How can I ever go home without you? Oh, how lonely the yard will be! Oh, Bobs!"

About noon he felt the nurse at the bedside, so he turned wearily over and opened his eyes to see what she wanted. But he looked right into the face of a

little yellow mongrel dog. His leg was bandaged, his ear was bandaged, and his coat looked very rough and torn. But his eyes were the most beautiful eyes in all the world and the lap of his tongue was worth more than bags of gold.

Tony gave a cry of joy and Bobs gave a bark of joy. Then they snuggled down with heads together and both were happy. Big Tim stood at the foot of the bed, but Tony didn't see him. So Tim whispered to the nurse:

"Ain't that one pretty love story? I sure am glad that a lonely boy can have a yellow dog sometimes. I'll come back later and get my patient when they have loved each other for a while. I'd like to own a yellow dog myself, if he would love me like that. A yellow dog and a real boy would just suit me fine. Maybe—now maybe some day I can own a share in those two. Um-m! I'd like to."

And Big Tim felt almost as happy as he left the ward as did Tony and Bobs.

A HERO OF ARMENIA

IT WAS noon-time of a hot, sultry day in the summer of nineteen-twenty. The sun poured its rays unmercifully down upon a little group of villagers far back in the hills of Armenia. All morning they had stood in the one little corner, guarded by three fierce Turks. When the little children had been restless, they had felt the lash of their whips. When the women had tried to sit down, they had been trampled by the feet of their horses.

But worse than the lash of their whip or the heat of the sun had been the dread as to what was to happen to them all. They had been forced from their homes because someone had told that they were Christians. Over and over during the day their keepers had cursed them as such. The faces of the women grew pale and the faces of the men grew hard as the hours went by.

There came a tramp of feet and a score of Turks were seen hurrying toward them. With hatred in their faces, they drew forth the little band, first to swear at them and then to torture them.

Among the rest of the Christians was Aram, a boy of fifteen. He was strong of limb and strong of heart. Since his father's death two years before he had cared

for his mother and now, with all the thoughtfulness of a man, he pushed her to the rear and stepped between her and the Turk. Not unnoticed was his act and a great arm caught him and pulled him to the front.

"So you want to be first, do you? Well, you shall. Stand there where we can all see you. Are you a Christian?" asked the Turk.

"I am, sir," said the boy, faint with fear.

"A strong one?" asked the Turk.

"I hope so," answered the boy.

"Well, you had better not be a strong one," said his captor. "You are to become a Mohammedan. Do you understand? Are you ready to change?"

"No, sir," said Aram. "I am not ready to change. That I will never do. I am a Christian."

"Ha, ha! We will see whether that is true or not. Boys often change their minds, you know." Then he turned to a soldier near him and said with an oath: "Give it to him. Begin at once."

Quickly the soldiers surrounded the boy and one drew from his robe a pair of pincers. Grasping the right hand of the boy, he tore the nails forcibly from two of the fingers. There was a scream of pain from the boy and a cry of sorrow from the mother, as the soldier dropped the wounded hand.

Aram heard the cry. Turning quickly he looked bravely into the face of his mother and said,

"Never mind, my mother. I shall be brave. I shall remember father, no matter what they do to me."

"Are you ready now, you dog of a Christian?"

screamed the Turk, snatching the boy by the shoulder.

"No, sir," answered the boy. "I am still a Christian."

Quickly two more nails were torn off, then two from his left hand and then more till none were left. But still the boy stood firm. Almost the Turk admired him for his bravery. But his orders had been: "Torture till they turn Mohammedan," so he cursed and swore and lashed the boy with his whip, while the little group of villagers dared not say a word.

"Take him to the posts," cried the Turk. "He shall turn though it takes the whole afternoon to make him do it."

Four soldiers hurried forward and drove four upright posts about four feet high into the ground. Then they dragged the boy near to them, stripped him of his clothing and tied him across the top of the four sticks, two hands to two of the posts, two feet to the other two. After all was done, they stood back to laugh and jeer.

Straight into his face beamed the burning sun like coals of fire. His body seemed blistering. His hands ached with pain. There seemed flies innumerable to add to his torment. Oh, how his head did ache! The moments seemed hours to the tortured boy.

Yet even as he hung there, he seemed to see the pale face of his father as he had gathered his little family together on the last night of his life when he knew he was to be put to death by the Turks on the morrow. Looking straight into Aram's eyes he had said:

"Better to die than to be a coward, Aram. God does not forsake those who trust in Him. Sometimes to die is gain. Never deny your God in these hard days that are ahead of you. I can trust you, I know."

So courage came back into his heart and he breathed the prayer that father had taught him to say as a boy: "Help me to be brave and true. Keep near me every hour."

And as he said the words, the heat seemed less intense and the pain more easily borne.

At the end of a half hour the Turk came again to the side of the boy and asked,

"Are you ready now?"

And the boy answered softly:

"I am still a Christian."

Oh, how angry the Turk became! His face seemed livid with rage. To have a boy defy him seemed more than he could stand. Raising high his great sword, he screamed:

"Change or die! You may have one minute. Change, I tell you."

But only a smile answered his rage as the boy said thoughtfully:

"To die is easier than to change. Father and I will both have died Christians and mother will not fail us when her turn comes. I will never change."

Down came the sword and the soldiers hacked the body in pieces in their rage. The little group cowered in the corner expecting them to kill them also. For a

second the Turk hesitated. Then turning to his men he said:

"What a Turk he would have made! Mohammed needs such as he. Go home. Another day will do for the rest." And he went his way.

But before that "other day" had come, the English had come and the Turks had fled. So today, in that little Armenian village far back in the hills, Aram's mother lives alone. But she looks with pride at things made with a boyish hand that still stay about the humble room and she says gently to her visitor:

"Those belonged to my Aram. He and his father both died Christians and I would not have it different. They were faithful even unto death."

THE BOY WHO WOULD NOT GO BACK

THE schoolmaster was hard and cruel; the boy was thoughtful and sensitive; and so there was trouble in that little country school in England in the days before our Revolutionary War. When the lad misspelled a word which he had tried hard to master, the rod was laid across his back, though he knew he had honestly tried. When the book could not be bought on time because there was no ready money in the home, then he was forced to do hours of school work outside of school hours. At these times something within him cried over and over: "It is not fair. It is not fair."

Often he was punished with the rod for his refusal to tell on the other boys. He longed for an education yet he could endure no longer the taunts and threats and beatings of the schoolmaster. So Francis Asbury left school when he was but thirteen years of age. He found work that he could do and, as the days went by, began to think himself quite a man. After all, he decided, it was great fun to be rid of the monotony of school. Thus he became a drifter.

But Henry Ward Beecher came to his home town. All boys love a hero and from the tales he had heard of Beecher, Francis thought him to be a hero. So he

eagerly sought an opportunity to hear him. Pushing his way to the very front seat, he listened as Beecher told of the value of a life and especially of the great, great value of a boy's life. He told of the need of the world for boys who were making their lives worth while.

As the boy listened, he became ashamed of his own life; ashamed that he had left school; ashamed that he had had no great ambition. As Mr. Beecher told of the power that God had in helping a boy to make and keep a purpose clear in his life, he knew that he wanted to find God.

"If you would build a great character, you must build with God. If you would be a great man, you must begin by being a great boy," said Mr. Beecher in closing. "Find a purpose and then work toward it."

Surely Francis Asbury carried the message in his heart as he left the room for, looking up into the heavens full of beautiful stars, he said quietly to himself at the end of the homeward walk:

"Some way, some time, somewhere I will serve if He will but show me the way. I must grow."

And the resolution stayed with him. He began to read good books; he studied his Bible to see what God's will might be. He prayed earnestly to God to show him the way and the means by which he might get ready to serve. He hunted for little things that he might do to help to make the world a better place. He found the church a helpful place so he gave good service there.

As he grew in knowledge and in character, of course, his opportunities for service became more numerous. Soon he was appointed a lay-preacher in the Methodist Church and was sent to the neighboring villages to teach and preach. He came to know the great Wesleys who were doing so much for the church in England and their lives were an inspiration to him in making his own more worth while. As he went, he emphasized over and over the message that Beecher had given to him:

"A boy's life ought to be worth while."

Sometimes the way was very hard and his friends tried to get him to do a different kind of work. But he had found a purpose and was working toward it. He had no wish to turn back.

Now America was under the rule of England and in America there was great unrest over some laws that England had made. The church saw the need of ministers to go and help in the crisis and they sent John Wesley about England calling for volunteers to go to America. It was a dangerous trip to take for the boats were small and a whole month must be spent on the way.

"They need strong young men who are ready to serve in a hard place," said Wesley.

"Perhaps this is my 'Somewhere,'" said Francis Asbury to himself. So he rose in his place in the church and said:

"I will go to America and help if you will take me."

He was an only child and to leave home and mother

for a land where the salary would be very small and the sacrifices very great took real courage. But he felt that perhaps this was his opportunity, so very soon he was on his way as a missionary to America. He was glad in his heart that his time had come to really serve.

On the way across the Atlantic there were severe storms and many were ill, so he began immediately to help others. He told stories to the children; he cared for the sick; he cheered those who were fearful of the storm. His seemed to be an errand of mercy.

First he went to work in Philadelphia and later to New York City, then a scattered settlement. Everywhere there was discontent, so his new work was very difficult. But he bought himself a horse, for there were no railroads, and went from place to place preaching and teaching. He planted churches wherever he could; he brought comfort and cheer where there was an opportunity. Always he seemed to be trying to make his life worth while. So many miles he traveled that he came to be known as the "Prophet of the Long Road."

Finally, after much talk and trouble, war was declared and persecution began. The colonists distrusted every Englishman and his life was often in danger. Other ministers closed their churches and went back to England. Letters kept coming from his friends at home begging him to return. Sometimes he was pelted with stones when he was doing his best to help and then he longed for home.

What ought he to do? Did he not owe it to his mother to leave America while yet he could? Should he go back and work in England? He wanted to go, yet he felt that he ought to stay.

Now Francis Asbury had a habit of asking God to help him in his difficulties so, after a pleading letter had come from England telling him how much he was needed there, both at home and in the church, he went alone into the quiet of the woods and prayed to God.

"Show me the way," he prayed. "Show me the way to make my life most helpful. Show me thy way, O God!"

And in the quiet of the wood he heard this answer:

"Who will be my shepherd if all go?"

He bowed his head and thought of all that this decision would mean. It was the hard way and only too well he knew what sacrifices it would mean. Then he prayed again:

"I will stay and be a shepherd, Lord, but I need help. Stand by me and help me to stand by the task."

So the good shepherd stayed and during those hard days that followed, he gave much, he suffered much and he received much, for the people came to know and to love him as he gave of himself for the work. They knew that they could trust him so he found many, many ways of easing their worries and of making them see the right decisions.

When the war was over and the churches were once more busily at work, it was decided to appoint over them a bishop who could lead them out in their great,

new work. And who should it be? A man could be sent from England, but he would not be able to win them soon. In all the church there was only one who knew the people, and the field, and the need. That man was the one who could work, who could trust, who could stay when others fled—Francis Asbury.

So he became the first American Bishop of the Methodist Church in America and much of its early growth was due to his work. Though many, many years have gone by since then, his name is still a very honored one in the history of Methodism. Much has been written of his life and work and he is held up to the boys of Methodism as the boy who found a purpose and then would not turn back. A great name is that of Francis Asbury.

TIM, THE ELEVATOR BOY

TIM'S face was so covered with freckles that you could scarcely find a clear place upon it. His hair was short and stubby and would never stay where he wanted it to stay. His nose was red and homely. Perhaps, if you had met him on the street, you would have said that he was an awkward, queer-looking boy.

But Tim had eyes that sparkled and shone and made you want to know him better. He had a smile that began with a little twitch of the lips and then rippled all over his face. And his laugh—oh! his laugh was as good as a bowl of sunshine.

Tim was an elevator boy in a dye factory and his car was used by one great wing of the place. Up and down, up and down he carried workers, overseers and officers, and all loved Tim because of his cheery disposition and winning smile.

Tim's clothes were shabby; his knowledge of the world was very, very limited and his knowledge of the English language more limited still. Yet his "Good morning" was an event in everyone's day.

"My, my! Ain't you glad to be alive today?" he called cheerily to Mary Flynn just before seven o'clock one morning. "Look at that er sunshine. Don't it make yer want ter shine, too? Come in, Mary. Let me put yer up higher where the air is jest great."

"Good morning, Doc," he called to the company doctor. "The top of the marning to yer. That er posy in yer buttonhole makes yer look grand. Every sick un will like to stay by yer terday, Doc. But then they always do that. Good-by and good luck terday."

When Matie Mack came to the elevator door she had in her hand a bunch of flowers for her desk in the upper room. But as she left the elevator, she slipped a tiny, red rosebud into the hand of the boy.

"Bless yer kind heart," he whispered. "I haint got any garden but a posy on me coat jest makes me happy all the day. Thank yer kindly fer remembering me. This er rosebud is sure a dandy."

So, one by one, the workers were landed at their day's work and Tim finally had time to glance at the morning papers which had been handed to him. He couldn't read them all but he loved to read what he could and to look at the pictures. So he sat in the car reading of a great train wreck when suddenly he heard a loud sound and then another.

Then there came a terrific explosion and dirt, bricks and wood flew in all directions. The building trembled like a leaf and Tim cowered in one corner of the car. What could have happened? He was afraid to even stir.

As soon as ever he dared, he crept to the door and what a sight met his eyes. One great building was in ruins, another was in flames and a part of the wing was gone in their own building. In some unknown

way a great tank of acid had exploded, people told him as they hurried by with white, set faces.

Like a flash there came the realization that all that lay between the employees in his building and death was himself and his car.

"May the good God help me," he cried as he shut the door of the car and started up the swaying shaft. On every landing were screaming, anxious women. Could he ever get them down? Would they listen to him and go slowly? If they pushed and struggled, all would be lost. Quickly he thought it all out as he went up and when he reached the top floor he called cheerily:

"Here I come fer ye. Ain't it great to be in the building that is all right? Now if yer won't push and only fifteen will come inter the car ter once, I kin get every one of yer down. But if yer push, then I'll never come up agin after yer. Now I'll see what yer will do. Only fifteen, remember. Twelve, thirteen, fourteen, fifteen. Full up. Now Aunt Becky, stay right there and watch fer me. Watch fer my red rose."

The shaft swayed and shook as, very slowly, he took the car down. But he sang cheerily from the foot of the shaft:

"I'm comin'. I'm comin'. Tho' me car is runnin' slow."

The people watched him breathlessly as he tried to save them. Up and down and up and down he went. A great crash told him that more of the building had

collapsed and the heat from the burning buildings was intense. But over and over he said to himself as again he went up through the dangerous shaft:

"Do yer best, Tim. Some of them folks has little uns at home. Yer must git them all down."

And the little red rose seemed to just be helping him for it was so bright and cheery every time he looked at it. One floor after another he emptied but the face of the elevator boy was becoming white and drawn. Suddenly there was a scream of terror. The flames were spreading through the shaft and one more trip must be made. Women at the foot covered their faces with their hands and wept as they heard Tim say:

"I guess she will hold fer another trip and I promised them to come back fer them. There's only five more up there and one of them is Matie Mack, the one what is so good ter me. Sure, I'm going up."

Oh! how slowly the car went! Oh! how ugly the flames looked as they licked the sides! The watchers below heard the door of the car open and a fervent "Thank God!" from one of the women. Then Tim's merry voice again called out, though this time it was all of a tremble:

"Now, here we go down. Ain't yer glad ter be alive ter tell how yer went through the fire and wasn't burned. Ain't fire pretty, though? Sure the shaft will hold if we go slow. Jest look at my red rosebud. Ain't it one fine match fer my red hair? Why, here we are, so soon. Now out with yer—and Mary—thanks agin fer my posy. It sure helped me a lot."

A moment later everyone was looking for the elevator boy. On every tongue was the story of his bravery. But he wasn't about the buildings and he wasn't in the street. Where could he be?

Sitting on the steps of a little house in a back alleyway was a freckle-faced, red-haired boy. He was patting the head of a big yellow cat and saying:

"'Twas great, Tom, jest great. Ain't it good I wasn't burned! My, I am glad I could help. But I don't want folks ter thank me so I am goin' ter sit out here with yer fer a spell."

And the big yellow cat rubbed against Tim's knee and seemed to understand.

THE LOVE OF TIGRANES

MANY, many years ago, more than five centuries before the Christ was born, there lived in Persia a very noted man. He was ruler of an empire; he was owner of great wealth; he had almost unlimited power. He was called Cyrus and is known in history as the founder of the Persian Empire.

Now Cyrus was eager for conquest so he sent his armies into all the neighboring countries to conquer. He had well trained men and many good generals so the Persian Empire grew and grew but still Cyrus was eager for more land and more power.

Finally his armies went into Armenia and, in spite of the bravery and courage of the Armenians, Cyrus was victorious. He burned their homes; he destroyed their fertile fields; he put many of the inhabitants to death. Then he chose a great group of the captives to be taken back to Persia as slaves in order to show how great had been his victory.

There were many wealthy merchants, many great teachers, many noted warriors and many, many brave, strong, young men of Armenia. But at the very head of the line of captives to leave the land was the King of Armenia and his wife, the King's son, Tigranes, and his wife with several royal children.

Oh, what a long, sad procession it was! They were carrying what they could find to help to furnish their home in the new land. They had been so happy in Armenia and now all was lost. It was many weary miles to Persia and the burdens became heavier and their hearts sadder as they neared their new home.

As Tigranes tried to find ways of helping his aged father and mother and his beautiful wife, his own deepest sorrow was that they must be prisoners and exiles.

At last the long journey was over and the royal captives were taken to one of the strongholds of the city to be kept there until it was decided what should be done with them. Day after day passed. The food was poor, the rooms were small and uncomfortable so the royal family were most unhappy.

One morning, many days after they had been brought to Persia, they were summoned before the king. What did it mean? Were they to be put to death? Were they to be separated? Would the events of the day make them more unhappy still?

Tigranes watched his beautiful wife as she dressed with care. She was so beautiful! He loved her so dearly! He was almost afraid to take her before the king.

In one of the great rooms of the palace, Cyrus awaited the captives. It was hung with costly tapestries; it was full of rare things brought from the conquered countries. The air of the rooms was filled with

costly perfumes. The king was dressed in all his beautiful robes for he wished to awe the prisoners.

Slowly, but with great dignity, they came before the great Cyrus. One after another they bowed low before the king in token of their servitude. Then Cyrus looked at them.

The old king was bent with all his years of service for his people, but Tigranes stood before him with all the pride of the son of a king. And when Cyrus saw him, he admired him.

"Tigranes," said the king, "what shall your ransom be?" Long the king waited while Tigranes bowed his head in thought.

"Tigranes," said the king a second time, "what shall your ransom be?"

Then the bowed head was slowly raised to the king and, placing an arm about the beautiful woman by his side, he said:

"Oh, Cyrus, great King of Persia, do with me what you will, but spare the life of my beautiful wife and let her go back free to my country that she may give her life for our little ones. Gladly will I give my life and possessions as a ransom for her life."

Though Cyrus was a great warrior and a powerful ruler, yet he had a kindly, noble heart and he was deeply moved by the love of the prince.

"Such nobleness and such love of man for woman shall not go unrequited," he said. "You shall all be free and you, Tigranes, shall take your beautiful wife back to home and country as an appreciation of your

own nobleness and loyalty. May others learn to love like you."

The royal family bowed low and kissed the hand of the king. Then Tigranes led the way from the presence of the king. His face beamed with happiness as he looked at the lady by his side. They were free, free!

"And what thought you of Cyrus?" asked the father.

"Did you note his majesty?" said the mother.

"Such a beautiful room it was in which he received," said one of the children.

But the wife of Tigranes spoke no word. At last Tigranes said to her:

"My wife, what thought you of the great king?"

"The king? Why, I did not see him," said she.

"You did not see him! Where were your eyes that you did not see King Cyrus?" asked Tigranes.

"Ah, my husband," she said, laying her hand lovingly on his arm and looking earnestly into his face, "I saw no man save the one who for love of me offered to lay down his life for me. My eyes and my heart had no room for anyone else. No king is more great or more noble than the one who for love's sake has ransomed me. I saw no king."

So Tigranes and his wife went back to Armenia; and the world, after all these years, still loves the story of the royal lover.

THE WINNER

CLOSE by the side of a little brook that came tumbling from the green hillside sat a very discontented Indian boy. He was whittling a stick and talking to himself as he whittled.

"I wish I knew how to get one. All the boys have them at the school. Jim earned his in football and George earned his by getting the best marks. Even Red Feather has a pin that the teacher gave him. I want a pin to wear and I want a brother but I don't see how I am going to get either of them."

Lonely Cloud tapped his knife sharply against a nearby stone. He had been at the mission school for a whole year and now he was beginning to think that soon he should go back again for another year. This time he was to have a suit of clothes like the rest of the boys, and he was so glad, but he did want a pin to wear on the lapel of the new coat.

"Every boy ought to have a brother," said Lonely Cloud again. "Fun can't be good fun here at home when there isn't anyone to share it with you. At school I can get along but oh dear, I do want a brother and I do want a pin."

It was growing warmer, so he slipped nearer to the stream, put his feet into the water and, pulling a paper

from his pocket, began to read. The story was interesting and for a few minutes he read steadily.

Then suddenly he looked at his feet.

"Why!" he gasped. "Why! how can that be? When I sat down here the water came only to my ankles and now it is much higher. How can that be?"

He looked about him but there was no one to answer the question for the men had gone to help a sick man nearby. Then a vague fear began to develop in his mind. Dropping his paper and knife, he ran quickly to the path and began to climb. Up and up and up he went. Then he came to the big dam on the hillside.

Creeping down by the lower wall, he slid stealthily along until he came to the place where the sluiceway was to be found. Then he gave a cry of fear. The dam was giving way. One stone was loosened and others were showing signs of weakening. Behind that dam was a vast amount of water. How long would it hold back? What could he do to help?

Creeping as fast as ever he could on the slippery moss, he came to the roadway again. Then he fairly flew to the house by the side of the dam where the keeper lived.

"The sluiceway is breaking! Hurry, hurry!" he called.

Then he ran down the steep hillside. The vines tripped him and he fell. A bit of sharp stone cut into his foot but on he ran, calling at every house:

"The dam is giving way! Hurry, hurry! Run for your lives."

Once he stopped to look at the stream and he saw that it was deeper than before and still there were others to warn. If only the men were there to help him! His head ached and his breath came very fast. But on he ran. Finally he had told them all and a messenger had gone on horseback to the next town.

Dazed in mind, he sat down for a moment to rest before starting across the plain to the Indian encampment. As he looked, he was sure that he saw something move on the opposite bank. Then a figure rose from the ground and from behind a tree a cow appeared. It was old Granny Bose and her cow.

Oh, yes, he knew her. All the boys did, for she was always telling tales on them and getting them into trouble. She was very old and very deaf. Lonely Cloud thought he would call to her, and then he remembered that she was deaf. If he crossed to get her, he might not be able to get back. The dam might break at any moment. Perhaps one of the men would come soon and then he could go after her.

He shaded his eyes and looked across. She was going farther away. Every minute added to her danger. The boy clenched his fists as he tried to think it through. Why should he go after her? She had never done anything for him. The water would be to his waist by now.

But wasn't he being the kind of a coward that the missionary had told about if he stayed there on the bank? An old lady needed help even when there was no danger. He put his feet into the stream and then

drew them out again. He looked this way and that for someone else to go. He tried to call her, but it was of no use. Once more he put his feet into the stream and hesitated.

Then he tossed the black hair back from his forehead as he said sturdily:

"If she were my mother I would want someone to go for her. I guess I had better hurry along. An Indian is no coward."

Into the swelling brook he went. A shadow crossed his face as he saw how much it had risen but he pushed his way across. Then he hurried to the hillside where the old lady sat. Taking the halter of the cow in one hand and helping Granny Bose with the other, he started for the brook. But it was very slow work for she could not understand why she should go home in the middle of the day. As they neared the bank, he could hear the brook rushing by and he wondered how he was ever to get the two across. Almost his boyish heart failed him as he tried to steady her through the current.

Part way across she stumbled and fell and he struggled to raise her to her feet. Then the cow pulled away and he tried in vain to get her again. Granny Bose, seeing the cow moving away, insisted on going after her. Oh, how tired he was! His head seemed dizzy and he longed to run away.

Then, just as he felt as if he just could not get her across, he heard a shout. A wagon containing a man and a boy had stopped on the opposite bank. Quickly

the man sprang into the water, carried Granny Bose the short remaining distance and Lonely Cloud followed behind.

First Granny was taken to a neighbor's, and then the brave Indian boy was carried to his home. Only two hours later the great dam gave way and the water covered the little valley, carrying everything before it. But the people all were safe on the higher ground, thanks to the warning Lonely Cloud had given them.

It was many, many weeks before the boy was strong and well again and his face was still pale when he went back to school. But what did he care? On his new coat he wore something of which he was very proud. Was it a pin? Indeed it was not. It was much larger than a pin for it was a bronze medal given him by the state for saving the lives of so many people.

And he had more than the medal, for in his pocket he had a letter which he had read over and over and over. It was from that white boy who had come in the carriage with his father and helped to save Granny Bose. And would you believe it, the letter began:

"My dear Indian Brother."

HE SAVED OTHERS

THE Chinese ocean steamer was plowing her way to the north with all her might but storm and wind and wave were all against her. On board there were some Chinese officials, a few foreign travelers and in the steerage there were many Chinese coolies who were on their way to the northern port of Vladivostok. In their own home towns there was little work and much want, but in Vladivostok there was plenty to do with good pay for the service. So they had left their homes.

Among the foreign passengers was a strong, noble-looking young American by the name of George Cornwall, who had been for a number of years a missionary in China. He had heard of the need in the distant city and was on his way to see what he could do. A native pastor was greatly needed and he hoped to find one for the Christians there.

But Mr. Cornwall was not among the cabin passengers. He had seen the possibility of helping those who were on their way to Vladivostok and thus having their friendship when he reached there and began his work. So, although he knew well the discomfort he would find in the steerage, he bought a ticket at the cheaper rate.

To ride in the steerage is bad enough in good weather but when the waves keep all from the deck, it is well-nigh unbearable for one who is refined and cultured. Cornwall at first gathered the children about him and taught them stories of Jesus. Then he helped the many who were ill and, as the days went by, those coolies learned much of what real love for God meant by watching the young man.

But the storm had driven the boat out of her course and one night, when the wind blew a gale and the waves ran high, the ship struck a rock. There was a thud, a shiver of the great ship and then the call to the decks. The lifeboats were lowered and manned. The cabin passengers were hastily helped down into them while the steerage passengers, wild with fright, were driven back to the rear of the ship. Twice the captain motioned to Mr. Cornwall to go down the ladder, but both times he only motioned to the crowd of women behind him.

Then the officers and crew began to fill the remaining places in the boats and the captain turned again to Mr. Cornwall, begging him to leave the ship.

"You are an American and we shall be in trouble when we get to port if we leave you here. I beg of you, take a place," he said.

"But why should you leave all these," pointing to the coolies, "and take the places yourselves?" said Cornwall. "They, too, are passengers. Indeed I am an American and an American is taught that ladies should be considered first. I shall not go."

"Why should we give them our places?" said one of the crew with a laugh. "They are only coolies. They are Chinese cattle. Come along."

"But they are a part of God's great family and I shall not leave them. While they are here, I shall stay," said the missionary.

So, although the Chinese pleaded with the captain not to leave them or, at least, to send the boats back after them, he and his crew rowed away from the sinking ship to safety. Only one man on the ship was not afraid and that was George Cornwall. He had done what was right and he believed his Father would protect him.

The long weary night dragged away. The storm-tossed boat rocked to and fro and sank lower and lower into the water. Would the morning never come? Perhaps if it were light they could signal for help. All they could do till then was to watch and pray.

Toward morning the waves grew less high as the wind died down. Back and forth on the deck walked the young minister. The gray of the sky turned blue, then pink and then red. Farther and farther he could see.

Ah! Was it a cloud or was it land in the distance? He lifted his glasses and studied the distant view. Then his face lighted with pleasure. It was land that he saw. Perhaps now he could save them.

Quickly he went below and put on a bathing suit which he had brought with him. Then he brought to the deck many coils of rope which he had been collect-

ing during the night. About his waist he firmly fastened one of the lighter ropes. The end of this he tied to another, and the end of this to another, until the great hawser was the last to be added to the long line.

When all was ready, he spoke a few quieting words to the coolies, told them what he intended to do and that he would come for them after a few hours, and then he dove from the ship into the sea.

In college he had been a strong swimmer but this was so different. Now lives were at stake. The rope hindered him and the water seemed very cold. But on and on and on he swam.

At last, tired and exhausted, he reached the shore and removed the rope, tying it firmly to a nearby tree. His body was numb from exposure. If only he could lie down and sleep and sleep, how glad he would be.

But out on the ship were many, many people, afraid of the dark cold water and the sinking ship. They were waiting for him to redeem his promise to save them. So he lay for only a few minutes to rest and then, making sure that the rope was securely fastened to the tree, he began to tug and pull. One rope after another came to him till he was sure he had one that would hold a good amount of weight. This also he fastened to the tree and then with tired body but loving heart, he went back, hand over hand, along the rope to the ship to encourage the coolies to use the rope as he had done and try to get safely to land.

How they loved him as they saw him coming back for them! How they trusted him as they started to

go alone through the cold water with the waves beating against them! How they cheered as he followed the last coolie along the rope to the shore! Not one had been lost. And when, a half hour later the ship sank from sight, they fell on their knees in gratitude to the man who had saved them.

Several years passed swiftly by and the cholera raged in China. As always, Mr. Cornwall was helping where there was need. But when the cholera was stayed, both Mr. and Mrs. Cornwall were dead and the family of seven little children were alone in the world.

Then the Chinese people said: "Now we can show how much we appreciated his life and work which he gave to us."

So they erected a great white marble *bei,* or monument, to his memory, most of the money being given by the coolie class. The heathen business men built a Y. M. C. A. in his honor. Others enlarged the school where he had taught.

But when they had done all this, they still had the most beautiful way of showing how much they appreciated him for they said:

"We loved him so much that we shall pray daily for the little family, and especially that one, at least, of the seven may come back to us some day, to teach us to love others as he loved God and us."

I SHALL LEAD

IN 1837 there was born in an old New England family a boy by the name of Robert. His home was one of love and care and as he grew older, more and more he longed to make a name for himself.

"Not just to keep the family name clean but to raise it even higher," was the way he told a friend of his ambitions.

So he went to Harvard to study and then to Europe, all the time seeking that which would make his life most worth while. He had many, many friends, and life contained for him much of pleasure and inspiration.

When the Civil war broke out, he enlisted and was assigned to the Second Massachusetts regiment. Quickly he rose to a place of honor and trust. Just about the time when his name was up for another promotion, the Fifty-fourth Colored Regiment was formed. It was the very first northern colored regiment to be formed. The men were rough and untrained. They needed a strong, likable man to lead them, if they were to be valuable to the Union.

And Governor Andrews of Massachusetts knew where such a man was to be found. So he sent a message to Robert Gould Shaw, offering him the opportunity of being Colonel of the regiment.

What a hard question that was for the soldier to decide! It meant hard work and a great amount of tact and patience and care. It also meant criticism from his friends. Not many of them would care to lead a regiment of colored men. Would this work be a means of raising his family name? Might his friends not think he had disgraced it?

Long he sat alone trying to decide what he should do with the offer. It was the call of his country; it was the request of the governor. The Union needed these black men as much as it needed the white men. They were ready and eager to help. If he could win them to faithful work and train them to be good soldiers, might he not be doing a great service for his country.

Yes, he would accept the offer. Perhaps this was the greatest opportunity that would ever come to him. So he wrote the governor that he would accept the place. Then he began to study how he could best do the work. He lived with them and worked with them and taught them so well that, when they were ordered to the front, those colored men loved Colonel Bob as their own lives.

At first they were sent to Florida and then the order came to help in the attack on Fort Wagner. It was a long, hard march which they had as they neared the fort and the men were very tired. But when they knew that the attack had begun, every man was ready to help. So they were assigned to lead the assault.

Forward they pushed to the ditch under a heavy fire. Men began to fall on every side.

"Guard yourself," called a fellow officer. "Send your men on the parapet and guard yourself."

Turning to him, Colonel Bob squared his shoulders and said sternly:

"Sir, my men have been ordered to scale the wall and I shall lead them."

Then up he went. For a second he stood with uplifted sword. Seeing his men hesitate, he called:

"Forward, Fifty-fourth. Come with me."

Then up they went and over. But Colonel Bob paid for his bravery, for he fell from the parapet with a bullet through his heart. And there in the trench, with his black men whom he had learned to love so well, they buried him on July 18, 1863, a martyr for his country.

But his country had learned of his worth. His state was especially glad to honor him. So they sent for St. Gaudens, the famous sculptor, and bade him make a fitting bronze statue of the great man. Today, in front of the State House on Boston Commons, the statue stands. It shows him mounted on a beautiful horse leading his men to the attack.

If you will stand in front of it for a few hours, you will see men and women, boys and girls from all over the country. Perhaps you will even see some from foreign countries standing there to read of the great soldier who in face of greatest danger could still say, "I shall lead."

So he kept the family name without stain and he added to the list of great names in the family:

"Robert Gould Shaw, Colonel of the Fifty-fourth Colored Regiment."

THE OLD FLAG

IN the attack on Fort Wagner, when Colonel Robert Gould Shaw so gallantly led his troops to the top of the parapet, the color-sergeant fell in the outer trench, wounded in both legs.

But as he fell, he gave a great cry and bravely held the flag until it was lifted by Sergeant Carney who had been standing nearby. How gladly he took it for often he had envied the color bearer the privilege of carrying that beautiful flag. It had been given especially to their regiment and now he could carry it.

Hurrying forward, he carried it up the parapet, held it aloft and the breeze sent it out over the climbing men. But a bullet wounded him in the thigh almost as soon as he was on the top and he fell, suffering intensely. Very slowly he managed to crawl to a protected spot and still the flag waved from the fort, though it seemed every moment as if he must drop the staff.

"The men need it! Oh, how they need it!" he said, over and over, to himself as the pains grew more and more intense.

The second brigade came up the wall and Sergeant Carney leaned forward to see if someone could help him. His head made a good target so a bullet came his way and grazed his head, making him dizzy and faint.

So he lay, only by supreme effort keeping it in the breeze until the retreating of the men began. Then slowly he began to crawl along on his one knee with the flag above him. The way seemed endless and he was almost exhausted when his comrades found him and carried him to the field hospital.

Cheer upon cheer rose from the men as they carried him in with the flag still floating above him. Tears sprang to many eyes as they saw how badly he was wounded. Sergeant Carney had gone out a soldier but now he was a hero.

A smile fluttered over his face as he listened to their cheers. Feebly he raised his hand in a cheer with the rest as he said:

"She never touched the ground, boys. The old flag never touched the ground."

Then they carried the heroic black soldier away to the care of the nurse.

THE SEARCHERS

FROM an old, old Norwegian legend comes this story of boyhood.

In the days that are long gone by, three boys came to the stile over which the boy loves to climb—the stile of manhood. And as they stood waiting their turn to climb, the messenger of the king came along the way.

His horse was strong and full of life. His dress was red and gold and it glistened in the sunlight. In his hand he carried a great tablet of stone on which was carved the message of the king.

Reining in his steed, the messenger read in a clear, ringing voice:

"Hear ye, oh boys of my kingdom! Hear ye, oh men that are to be my counsellors some day. You are the hope of this land. You are our greatest treasure. Come one and all to my palace that I may give to you a token of my love for you. As the bell in the tower strikes six, ye shall assemble there."

Then the messenger vanished and the boys looked at one another. They were called to the palace of the king. They were to receive a gift. What a wonderful day for them all!

Promptly at the hour named, they came to the castle wall and, with others, were taken to the treasure room

of the king. And there in long, long rows stood strong iron boxes. They were securely locked and they were banded with iron. On the top of each box was a name—the name of some boy in the kingdom.

The boys eagerly watched the messenger as he searched the name-plates. Yes, there was one for Karl, and one for Olaf, and one for Hans, the three boys soon to become men.

Hurrying forward, they claimed their treasure and willing hands helped them to load the boxes on carts, for they were very heavy. Then the boys started to leave the castle. Just outside the gate, they remembered that they had no key with which to open the boxes. Back they all went to the treasure house to ask for the keys.

They found the keeper of the treasure and said to him:

"Please, sir, may we have the key to our boxes. We are eager to open them at once."

But the keeper only smiled as he looked into their merry eyes and said:

"Boys, that I cannot give you. I have no key to any box."

"But how can we open them if we have no key?" they all cried at once.

"That is for you to answer," he replied. "You must make the key for yourself. In yonder basket you will find tools and material of which the key can be made. You are free to help yourself to as much as you think you will need."

Wonderingly the boys took of the tools and the metal and started on their way home again. Once outside the castle, they began to talk of their new gift. Many were the suggestions made as to how the boxes might be opened. Then their ways parted and each drew the treasure box into his own dooryard.

Quickly the days passed by and each boy set about opening his box. First Olaf tried to pry the cover off; then he tried to melt the bands with a hot iron. Finally he decided that the easiest way was to take heavy irons and smash the box in pieces. Then he could use the gold pieces which he was sure the box contained. So, early and late, he pried and hammered and bored and smashed, but still the box remained unopened.

Karl heard of the plans of his friend but he said to himself:

"To pound and hammer and force the lock is much too hard work for me. Now many people in the land have had boxes given them by the king and I am sure many of them have made their keys. Surely some of those keys will fit my box. I will borrow until I find one that will open it. I am in no hurry and that will be much the easiest way, I am sure."

So he went first to his friends and borrowed all the keys which they owned. And none would open the lock. His neighbors were asked to loan their keys. Then he went from door to door, and from town to town until he was an old man. But still the treasure was hidden from his sight.

Now Hans was the son of a poor widow and he had little time either to hammer the box open or to borrow a key. Early in the morning and late at night he was trying to earn money to support the home. So he put his iron box close to his bedside in the little attic and near to it he placed the tools and the metal.

Oh, how he did want to open it! Every night he lovingly fingered the box. It contained a treasure and it had been given to him by the good king. The keeper had said that he must make the key but he had no idea how to begin. At last he went to an old locksmith who said:

"A key is it that you want to make? Surely I will show you. When you have finished your errands each day, come to me and I will teach you."

So he learned to take the impression and file the steel and shape the key. Slowly but surely his piece of steel became more and more like the lock on his box. And the old locksmith, watching him at his work, nodded his head in approval and sent often a special message to the king.

At last one night the lock turned in his hand. Oh! Oh! how excited he became! What was within? Almost he feared to lift the lid. Quickly he ran to the stairway and called:

"Mother, mother, the box has opened! Come and let us find my treasure together."

So the gray-haired, sweet-faced mother and the big sturdy boy lifted the cover; then they lifted a paper

that lay across the top of the box. Beneath this they found a silk cloth bearing the arms of the king.

Below this were gold pieces—very many of them and hidden among the gold pieces was this note:

"In this box are pieces of gold, but that is not the real treasure. Far greater in value than gold is the knowledge you have gained and the powers of perseverance you have increased in opening the box. The king needs such boys to serve him. There is awaiting you at the castle a place of service for your king."

So Hans opened his box and he found, thereby, the greatest treasure, a life of happy service for others.

HIS CHANCE

JACQUES was dining-room boy on one of the great steamers that ply between New York and France and his hours were hard and long. Six times every day he must wait on the long tables full of passengers. Over and over the plates must be changed during the course of a meal and this meant many steps for the boy. But this was only a part of the work which he had to do. His superiors were often harsh with him when he made mistakes but he did his very best in his work.

Often when the day was over he would go out on the deck where the steerage passengers were sitting and look across the Atlantic, thinking of the days that had gone forever. Not always had he been a waiter. Before the war, his life had been so very different.

Then he had lived with father and mother and his two sisters in beautiful Alsace. He had gone to school and stood high in his class. He had had his own pets and playground. He had been loved and cared for and life had been so very full of happiness.

But now father lay in a soldier's grave, one sister was lost and mother was so sad and so helpless that the other sister, Emelie, had to care for her all of the time. Only Jacques was able to earn any money to support

the home. A neighbor had secured for him this place on the boat and the little family had moved to Havre, in order that he might be able to come home when the boat was in port. So, of course, all the boy-interests had had to be laid aside for the work of the man. As he would stand and look across the sea, he would long with all his soul for the days in Alsace.

But there came a voyage that seemed harder than any other had been. A Glee Club from one of the great American Universities was on board and sat at his table. They were about his age; they had such friendly faces. But their hands were not hard and stained as his were. Their faces were full of happiness as they talked of all they were to see and do in sunny France. His face was full of bitterness. They were on their way to sing to the people of France. But he, too, had a voice to sing and he and father had often dreamed of the day when he should sing to the people of France.

Why should he be a waiter while they were honored because they could sing? Why could not someone have saved his father so that he might have had his chance to sing? His soul was full of bitterness as he changed plate after plate for the merry-faced boys.

Once he changed work with another of his mates, a deck-hand, for he had heard the boys say that they were to sing in the salon that evening. When the music began, he crept close to the window to listen and he stood there spellbound. How they could sing! How he longed to sing with them! Father and he had

learned to sing the Misére and the Crucifixus, so he could have helped in those two numbers at least. All he could do was to hum softly under his breath as they sang. And when he went to his hard berth, it was long before he went to sleep. He was very unhappy indeed.

So the days went by and the moonlight nights became more and more wonderful. One night, when the air was balmy and the moon was very bright, a little crowd of blue-jacketed men gathered about the machinery on the lower deck. On the upper deck, the carefree passenger strolled back and forth in the moonlight, occasionally stopping on the bridge to look down on the men below. Why had they gathered together there?

At first the men talked and told stories and many a happy laugh floated up from below. Then they began to sing French songs, snatches of operas, popular songs and even the Marseillaise.

Gradually a group gathered on the bridge above, listening to the songs of the workmen.

"Who can be the owner of that tenor voice?" asked one of the boys of the orchestra. "If it is the one on the front row, he looks like a young boy. What a splendid quality of voice he has there."

"Why that is Jacques, our waiter," said another. "Who would have dreamed that he could sing like that. Listen to that high note he is carrying."

"Oh, Jacques," called one of the boys on the upper deck. "We like your voice. Sing us a solo, will you?

We want to hear you sing alone, if the other men don't mind."

"Indeed we don't mind," answered the leader below. "We like to hear him sing as well as you do. Come on, Jacques, give them the song you were giving to us a few nights ago."

Then all the men joined in the request but the boy hesitated. Could he sing to them? They were all trained singers and perhaps his song would not seem good to them. Perhaps his voice would break as it did sometimes.

All was still for a moment. Then Jacques walked away from the men and looked far away over the sea. But there arose a melody so full of loneliness and longing that one scarcely dared to breathe lest it should cease. The blue-jacketed men leaned forward to listen for they had never heard him sing like that before. The men above leaned far over the bridge and their faces showed their pleasure and appreciation.

Just a short, little song it was, and when it was ended Jacques, the singing waiter, passed quickly into the cabin and out of sight. Straight to his bunk he went and his body shook with sobs as he cried:

"I can sing. Oh! I know I can sing! I hate being a waiter. I want father and I want to sing. I want to do as father and I had planned so long. I want to go to school and then learn to sing."

After the meal was over the next morning and everyone had gone from the dining-room, a kindly-faced man laid his hand on Jacques' shoulder and said:

"Jacques, have you gone to school?"

"Yes, sir," answered the boy.

"And could you go to school now if you wished to do so?" asked the man.

"Oh no, sir. We have nothing left since the war, sir," said the boy. "Father is dead and mother needs me."

"But would you like to go to school if you could?" asked the stranger.

"Indeed I would, sir," said Jacques sadly. "Better than anything else in the world, I should like it."

"I heard you sing last night, Jacques. I was on the bridge. You have a wonderful voice. You must not be a waiter; you must sing to the world. Over in America we love to help boys whose fathers gave their all for France. My University will gladly let you study there and I will teach you to sing. Would you like that?"

With eyes just brimming with happiness, the waiter looked up into the eyes of the conductor of the University Orchestra.

"I should be so happy—oh, so very, very happy if I could," he said. "But mother is first. When we get to Havre, we will ask her—and she can always find a way. I thank you, sir. I thank you."

That night in the moonlight there floated from the lower deck, late in the evening, a joyful, happy song sung by a French boy. Could you have translated the song, you would have heard these words:

"God's in his heaven. All's right!
All's right with the world."

Once more Jacques was singing the song that father had loved to sing in the little home in Alsace—the song he had never once sung since the father had been buried beneath the little white cross in sunny France. Once more there was hope in his heart.

THE LOVE OF A MOTHER

DOWN the roadway that leads to the Argonne Forest in France sped an automobile and in the rear seat of the car sat a woman, dressed in deep black. Her eyes were red with weeping; her face was marked with suffering.

From far-off America she had come to find the grave of her only boy. Early in the war, long before the Americans had joined the allies, he had volunteered to help and he had given many long months of service to France before he fell. All along the roadway from Rheims she had been thinking of him. Perhaps he had been in these very trenches; perhaps some little dug-out that she had passed had been his home; perhaps he had been able to protect some other mother whose home was now only a pile of gray stone.

As she saw the desolation of the little towns, the great barren tracts of country, the lack of men and boys everywhere, the women doing the heavy work of the fields, there grew more and more of bitterness in her heart for the nation that had robbed her of her boy, the idol of her great home.

So she traveled on and on and on. Finally the car stopped before a cemetery where there were hundreds of crosses. On the one side there were many, many

white ones, marking the graves of those who fought for France. On the other side were equally as many black crosses to mark the graves of those who had worn the German uniform. On some of the graves were flowers, showing that friends had been to the graves.

Down the long rows she made her way, looking often at the slip of paper sent her by the government to tell her in what row and what section her boy was buried. And then at the very end of the cemetery, she saw his name in black letters on the white cross. "Franklin Meade. Jan. 15, 1918. Mort pour la France."

For a long, long time the mother knelt by the little cross. How she longed to see him! How she had loved him! How glad she was that she believed that he had really helped to win the great war! She prayed for her boy and then for herself that she might be as true as he had been to what she saw was right and good.

Finally she rose, unwrapped the great bundles that the chauffeur had brought from the car and began to place the beautiful flowers that they contained on the grave. That was all she could do! At least his grave should be beautiful when she left it. She would cover it completely with all these flowers which he had loved so much.

Stepping aside to arrange them more carefully, she suddenly became aware of a black cross close beside the white cross of her son; another was just behind

it. Why had they laid him beside the Germans? Her whole nature rose in revolt. Why should he have been put here when he gave so much freely to France. The Germans had been so heartless and cruel. They had even taken him away from her. She had thought that she wanted him always to stay where he had been buried, but now she would have him removed at once. He should not stay there with black crosses beside him. He should either lie surrounded by comrades or else she would have him brought to the home cemetery.

So she stood by the grave and looked down the long lines on both sides. Ah! every cross meant a boy or a man. Every one had been as much to some mother perhaps as Franklin had been to her. In her mind she seemed to see a German mother kneeling by the grave next to her, angry that her son should lie by the side of the soldiers who had made her home desolate. How many mothers there would be if one were kneeling by every white cross and every black one! Oh, how much the mothers of the whole world had suffered!

All unconscious to herself, there was creeping into her face a look of great tenderness. The little black crosses no longer spoke of enemies. They told of boys and men who had obeyed the call of their country. And that was a great call. They were there to protect their homes from what they believed was evil.

Once more she looked at her own white cross—"Mort pour la France." She had money and time. She could come to the grave of her son. Perhaps many

of these many mothers would never be able to come and place a flower here.

Then that gentle American mother took a beautiful rose from the grave of her own boy and laid it on the grave at the right which was marked with a cross of black. Another she placed below the black cross in the rear, and still another on the white cross at the left.

From the fields nearby the chauffeur brought great armfuls of the beautiful, red poppies growing in profusion everywhere, and on many, many graves in the corner of the cemetery she placed little bunches of them, making the place seem cheerful with their bright color. And some of the poppies were on the grave with the white cross and some on the grave with the black.

"A mother's love is big enough to take all boys in," she said softly to herself. "I am glad now that my boy has been laid here with other boys who loved their home and their country. The boys were not to blame. When they have been put here they are all 'dead for their country.' How beautiful their little corner looks and how much better than if all the flowers had been heaped on Franklin's grave. I am sure he would have had it so."

The sun was sinking in the west and the sky was alight with color as she rose to go. She had taken many pictures to carry back with her and she had only time to make her train. So with a long last look she went back through the cemetery, thinking deeply of what she had seen.

Then, as she softly closed the gate behind her, she said:

"God keep them all, as He loved them all, and help the mothers of the world to teach the love that makes war impossible. Here they are all heroes."

THE GRADUATION GIFT

MATTHEW Dean Colby was very sure, when he came out on the veranda of his home that June morning, that he knew as much as ever he needed to know. Why? Oh! he was to graduate from the High School that day and every High School boy knows what a wise person a graduate must be.

Mother had suggested that he wear a dark tie but he knew better than to wear the one she suggested. Father had suggested that he take time to do some rehearsing for his part on the afternoon's program, but he wasn't afraid of that little speech. Why, if he forgot it, he would make something up and go on.

So he looked once more over the group of graduation gifts on the table and then took his way to the attic. Mother had said at the breakfast table that he would find grandfather's gift there. What could it be if it had to be put in the attic? Had grandfather himself put it there?

He stopped for a moment to look into the room that grandfather used to have for his own. Somehow Matt—as grandfather used to call him—somehow Matt liked to come into this room. The chair still stood by the window in which grandfather always sat at story time. His Bible lay on the table and when

Matt looked at it, he remembered the many stories grandfather had read to him out of the book after he had told them in his own wonderful way.

Grandfather's picture, taken when he was a young man going to war, still looked down from the wall. Oh yes, Matt liked this room for he had dearly loved the old soldier who had lived in it so many years. So he sat down in the big arm-chair for a time and then started once more for the attic, quietly closing the door behind him. Grandfather had loved him and had looked forward to his graduation day. What had he left for his gift?

Over in front of the window in the attic was a little, brown horsehair trunk that he had never seen there before, so he made his way toward it. On the top, in his grandfather's writing, he found these words:

"To my grandson, Matthew, on his graduation day, with the hope that he may love and cherish the things within as I have loved and cherished them. Only to one who was to carry my name and who had loved me would I have been willing to entrust them for they are my dearest treasures. They belong to my grandson because I believe in him."

Almost he feared to open the box. These were grandfather's treasures. All the pride of an hour ago was gone. Now he was touching the things that had belonged to a great, great man.

Across the top of the trunk lay a torn old flag—very dirty, very much tattered and very frail. Pinned to its corner was a note:

"When you see this you will think of Bunker Hill and my empty sleeve. I saved this flag in order that my grandson might live in a free country. Sometimes when a great crisis comes to your country in your day, let it remind you to fight for that which will give to your grandchildren a free and happy country in which to live and grow. Pass this flag unsullied to your boy when you are through with it."

Matt's face was very grave as he lifted the old flag which grandfather had brought downstairs once in a long, long while and allowed him to reverently touch. Now it belonged to him and he was to pass it to his boy some day. Would he ever have a boy who would grow to be great like grandfather? If he did, he would have to be great himself. And Matt bent low and touched the side of his face to the old flag, just as he had seen grandfather do so many times.

Below the flag was an old army suit and a cap and a sword. Then a quaint old picture of grandmother; on the back of which grandfather had written:

"I chose her because she was pure and true. To her you owe more than ever you dream. She gave to you your beautiful mother and many, many of your ideals."

Below the picture was another of George Washington and, as Matthew picked it up, he read in a strange handwriting:

"To Matthew Dean, drummer-boy in the Colonial Army, who at sixteen has proved that he has in him the stuff of which heroes are made." And it was signed, "George Washington."

Sixteen! Matt was sixteen and he had never proved that. No great man could say that of him. The teachers in the High School would never say that. He hadn't even conquered his lessons. Yet grandfather had earned the right to have this picture and this commendation, though he had only been a farmer-boy with little chance to learn.

One by one the boy took out the little things that came next, about many of which grandfather had told him. They were bits of the war and reminders of many friends who had loved him during his long life. To Matt, they were like old friends.

Finally he came to a little copy of the Bible. One corner had been torn by a shell but the title page was still there, though many of the pages were torn and worn. Matt read there:

" 'He that ruleth his spirit is greater than he that taketh a city. Quit you like men. Be strong.' Grandmother."

How grandfather had loved this little Bible which he had carried through the war and which was so very, very old!

Across the bottom of the trunk, grandfather had spread a cloth bearing the coat-of-arms of the noble family from which he had come. Matt was to remember that his ancestry was of the best.

At last the trunk was empty and all about him were grandfather's things. How rich Matt felt! And yet how lonely he felt! If only grandfather had been alive to see him graduate from school! Lovingly he fingered

his new gifts as he put them back into the trunk. Grandfather had entrusted them to him because he had faith in him. Some day he, too, could pass them on. He had a clean name and a wonderful inheritance. He, too, could prove that he had in him the stuff of which heroes are made and he would. He would protect the flag that grandfather had saved for him. He would be strong.

So he carried the trunk down to his bedroom where it would be very near to him and help him to remember, when he was tempted to be a failure. He loved everything in that trunk.

"I will begin by conquering my own self," he said as he once more closed the lid of the trunk, after he had carried it down and looked to see that all was safe inside. "Then, perhaps, some day I can do greater things."

Many, many years have passed since that day of graduation but the picture of George Washington still stands on the mantel of the bedroom of Matthew Dean, now an old man with bent body and snow-white hair. Beside it are many trophies that he has earned and back of it, his appointment as a Colonel in the United States Army with citations for bravery and courage.

And Colonel Dean has a young grandson who is patiently waiting for the day to come when he shall graduate from the High School and be the owner of a very old, very much tattered, very frail United States flag which is in a glass case in his grandfather's room.

Sometimes they stand together in front of the case

and the Colonel tells him stories of the old man who saved it and lost his arm by so doing. And then the old Colonel will say to the boy beside him:

"I shall give it to you, Matthew, because I have faith in you. It is my dearest treasure, and I have tried to keep it unsullied for your sake. When it comes to you, pass it on to your son with honor."

THE VOLUNTEERS

ON THE very top of one of the hills that guard the famous old town of Verdun in France stands Fort de Vaux. Like a great sentinel it stood during the World War, keeping watch over the city below, and the people of the town, now that the war is over, point with pride to the old fort and say:

"The enemy tried hard to keep it, but our men were brave and strong and again we won it back."

It was late in the afternoon of a June day and two very young soldiers were taking a party of Americans through the fort. Down the dark passage-ways, up the dark, narrow stairs, past the shelves covered with hay on which the defenders had slept, then through a hallway to the tiny little chapel where many, many men had found strength for the hours of struggle—on and on and on they went. Only the two small lamps in the hands of the guides gave light to the visitors. But the guides took great pride in showing the old fort, for it had helped to protect their homes. Finally, after both inside and outside of the place had been inspected, they led the way to a little oblong mound in front of the fort. At its head was a white cross. Above the mound were many withered flowers and some fresh flowers.

The soldier waited while the visitors read the names of several men which were written on the cross, and, below them, "Mort pour la France" ("Dead for France").

Then, with his cap in his hand and love in his eyes, he said:

"It was in 1916, and the Germans were bombarding the fort, which was being defended by over two hundred men. For five days there had been no water in the fort. The heat was very great. The powder in the air made the throats of the men very dry. So they suffered more and more as the hours went by.

"To get water, one must go for three miles through an underground passage and then out in the open field to the spring. No men could be spared from the defense, yet water must be had. It was almost sure death to try to get it.

"Then these men went to the commander of the fort and volunteered to go for water.

" 'We shall all die without it,' they said. 'We may be able to save your lives by going. At least we are glad to try.'

"And so they went through the dark tunnel, carrying all the vessels that they could in order to bring back enough so that all might have a little drink, at least. They made their way to the spring and started back. But the Germans saw them and fired.

"When they did not come back, others went to seek for them, and they found them all dead in the field. So they brought them here after the bombardment was

over, where we could all see their grave and remember their love and courage."

Again the soldier pointed to the words on the cross: "Mort pour la France." Then he smiled a rare smile as one and another of the visitors brought poppies from the nearby fields and laid them on the grave of the brave men who had laid down their lives for their comrades. Picking up a bit of dried flower from the grave, he handed it to one of the visitors, saying:

"Take it back to America. By trying to save our men, they were trying to save your men and your country. They were all heroes."

THAT HE MAY PLEASE HIM

HE WAS a young missionary, home on a furlough from Africa. He was visiting in the home of another missionary who had given most of his life to Persia. After his long years in the South of Africa it meant much to be again in a home where there was comfort and love and happiness. So Herbert Withey was thoroughly enjoying it all.

He enjoyed talking over his work with Mr. Bassett, but he enjoyed still more the hours that he spent with Ruth, the youngest daughter in the home.

Ruth had a sunny face and blue, blue eyes. She had a winning smile and a keen mind. Ever since the first day he had seen her he had admired her, but the admiration had quickly turned into deep love for the girl. Then, as the days went by, he loved her more and more.

But his work lay in far-off Africa. Only too well he knew the dangers of the life there. Already three of his sisters lay buried there after a few short years of work. Could he ask her to marry him and go there to live? Over and over he asked himself the question, and his visit drew near to a close with the question still unanswered.

Finally one day he could keep silent no longer. He

told her of his love for her, and asked if she thought she could be happy to live in a heathen land with him.

"I have often told you of the dangers of the climate, Ruth," he said. "You must remember it when you tell me your answer."

And to his great joy the girl answered:

"I have learned to love you dearly during these months that you have been in our home, and I am perfectly willing to risk the African climate if I can make a home for you and help you to help Africa."

So they went together to the parents, who, in turn, went with them to the old family physician who had had to fight so many years for the life of the girl. It was with grave faces that the little party came back to the home an hour later.

"For Ruth to go to Africa would be to doom her to death," he had said. "As she is now, she could not live a year in that climate. She must not go. Why should Mr. Withey ask her to do it? If he loves her, why will he not stay here and work where there is so much need? There are books to be translated for Africa and missionaries to train if he still wants to feel that he is helping the black people. I am sorry to spoil the happiness which Ruth thinks she would have there, but she must not go."

Then followed days of struggle in the life of the young man. Should he stay? His work was there. He had told them he would come back. Should he go? It seemed as if he could never go back into the lonely home again. It seemed too drear for words, after

living in the Bassett home. What was right? What ought he to decide? Would he do his best work there when he longed so much to be with Ruth? Could he do his best work here when he felt that he ought to be there?

At last, one beautiful evening as they walked together in the moonlight, he said to her, while his heart seemed ready to break:

"Ruth, I feel that I have decided. I must go back alone. God called me to that work, and I dedicated my life to Him. I should feel like a coward if I should stay away longer. I should despise myself. Much as I love you, I must leave you and go my lonely way."

There was a moment of tense silence as she held firmly to his arm. Then she said bravely:

"It is the only way. I have felt sure that that was the way you would decide and I want you to go. I should have had to think less of you if you had decided to stay. Love grows stronger as duty is done. My love will go with you, and stay with you, and wait patiently for your return when the years have passed by until another furlough. I am satisfied to have it so."

And so he went back alone, carrying with him many little gifts made by her own hands to be placed in his rough, little home. There was the easy pillow for his chair, the dainty cup and saucer for his coffee, the embroidered motto for the wall, reading: "That he may please him who hath called him to be a soldier." Often as he looked at it he could hear her say again, as she had said at the steamer:

"A good soldier never falters—and especially a soldier of the great King."

The home was so lonely that at times it seemed to him that he must run away from it all. Yet when he looked at the three graves of his sisters, he was glad he had not brought her with him.

One day a great African chief came to visit him in his home. He had heard much of him and he wanted to visit with him. He was a wicked old chief, but Withey was not afraid. So they sat and talked of many things. Then the chief asked:

"Why do you live alone? A woman makes a hut more happy. No black man lives without a woman in the home."

For answer the missionary took a picture of Ruth from his pocket and handed it to the old chief, waiting for him to look at it carefully. It was a beautiful picture of the girl with the smiling eyes and the sunny face. After a time the missionary said:

"That little lady is across the big, big sea in my own land. She is the one I love, and I could not love another. She would come and make my home happy, but if she came she might soon be ill. Perhaps I might have to lay her beside my three sisters there. I cannot let her come, I cannot marry another, and so I must live alone."

The chief looked again at the beautiful face and his old head shook sadly.

"She would make light," he said. "She would make much light."

The very next day two wives of the old chief came and asked for Mr. Withey.

"We wish to see the picture," they said. "The picture of the beautiful woman whom you love and for whose sake you live alone. Our chief—he liked her."

They were old and wrinkled and dirty. Almost he hated to put the dainty picture into their hands.

"Ah! the beautiful face—the curly hair—the pretty dress!" they exclaimed.

For a long time they looked at the beautiful face. Then they knelt before the missionary as they said:

"We are sorry. We are very sorry. Now we understand why you love her so much you cannot marry another. You love her very much."

As the missionary watched them go down the trail he said to himself:

"They are only black women, but they know what I mean when I say that I love Ruth well enough to be true. Love is a world language. I am glad that the old chief came to see me."

The months rolled by and then more months. Late in the fall, as he sat in the doorway of his home, they brought to him a letter in the well-known handwriting. For a moment he held it fast in his hand. Oh, if it were only she that had come! Then he broke the seal and read it. His face lit with joy and the tears rolled down his cheeks. Again and again he read it:

"Every hindrance has been removed and I am well and strong. I am well! I shall come to you and the little African home very soon. God is very good."

He shared his good news with the natives about him, and then they began to make the home ready for its queen. They rubbed and scrubbed. They planted and transplanted flowers and shrubs. And they counted the days till she should come.

One day, not many weeks later, a steamer anchored off shore, and as soon as her anchor was dropped a brown, swarthy American went on board. He was looking for someone, not at all sure he was to be rewarded in his search. But he was hoping. Suddenly he saw a dainty white dress which looked as if it might belong to her.

There was a rush across the deck and Ruth was there—Ruth with the sunny face and the smiling eyes—Ruth, the one of whose coming he had dreamed so long; Ruth, who could turn his house into a home.

On the shore the natives were waiting for them and they threw flowers in the way and sang to her. But, after the happy girl and her Christian soldier had entered the little house, an old chief and his two wives looked lovingly after them, and he said:

"We understand, and we are glad. He was brave to do what he thought was the right. He loved her very much, yet he came to us. Now he can have light in his home. We are glad, glad!"

THEY SHALL NOT PASS

IT WAS the night of the twenty-third of June, nineteen hundred twenty-one, and the war-torn city of Verdun was in gala dress. Flags floated from the ruined buildings as well as from the few new ones. Gayly dressed officers were seen in the streets; a splendid military band was assembled in the square. A great hero was in the town—Maréchal Petain, the hero of Verdun.

The day marked the fifth anniversary of the retaking of one of the great forts that guarded the city, so there had been patriotic addresses, a great parade of soldiers, and many glad reunions of friends of the war days.

How they loved the brave man who, in the face of great struggle, had given to them the message that rang round the world:

"On ne passera jamais"—"They shall never pass."

His courage had rekindled theirs and the country had been held. All the city was glad to do him honor. So they assembled in the narrow streets of the old city. There were young and old, wounded soldiers with many stripes and crosses, young soldiers with happy, care-free faces; there were mothers in deep black dresses and girls dressed in all the colors of the rainbow. It was a sight to remember.

As the day wore away, there drifted into the crowd men and women and girls from the land across the sea. They were tourists, glad to be in Verdun on such a gala day. To them this was a rare sight, so they listened to the quartet and the band. They moved about among the crowd, waiting for the exercises to begin in the evening.

Now the city square was in the very heart of the ruin. Above it, on the hillside, towered the demolished houses. Even on the square itself there were great blocks of stone which had fallen there from above. On the walls of the houses above, on the sides of the hill and on the blocks of stone sat the waiting people, while the streets were filled to overflowing.

On a great granite block, very near to the orchestra, sat a boy—an American boy. All day he had been riding through the battlefields of France, and every bit of his loyalty and patriotism had been called forth by what he had seen. In face of the greatest struggle they had held. They had died, if necessary, for the right. He wanted to be in the very midst of these old, wounded soldiers on the square.

The boy's face shone as they sang the "Marseillaise." Near him sat a soldier, proudly touching his Croix de Guerre, and the boy wished that he might own one. Before him sat a mother dressed in deep black and the tears fell as she sang the song.

For a moment he forgot the crowd as his mind went back over the war. Why had they held? Why had they suffered? Why had they won their crosses? He

read the answer in the faces of the crowd about him. They had stood for the Right, so they had a right to wear crosses and to be honored.

As he looked into the faces of the men about him, his own life seemed so useless, so careless, so full of weakness. To him, also, there had come a chance to stand for the right. Not on the field of battle, but in a place where it meant a long, hard fight to win in the face of great temptation. But he had hesitated; he had even played with the question. He had no right to be here with all these brave men. He had been a coward.

Suddenly he was roused from his thoughts by a voice singing those old war words, "On ne passera jamais." The crowd was bending forward, eager to catch every word. Every face was full of emotion as one verse after another was sung by the strong, tenor voice. Oh, what a wonderful song it must be to so enthuse a great crowd like this!

At the close of the last verse the singer raised his hand to signify that all should sing. Then, from the ruins above, from the street below, from orchestra and from chorus, there came a burst of song. It seemed to pour from their very souls as they sang over and over again those glorious French words:

"They shall never pass. They shall never pass. Never, never, never!"

Slowly the American boy caught the resolution and the determination of the brave Verdun people who had suffered so much for the right. Then he joined in

the last refrain, using the language of the people about him. "On ne passera jamais, jamais, jamais."

The crowd scattered to their homes and the ruined city shone white in the moonlight. But a boy of eighteen still sat quietly on a great, fallen block of stone, looking at the scene about him. He was humming over and over the words of the beautiful song, but in his heart he was saying:

"They shall never pass! Those things that would make me less a man shall never pass the threshold of my life. I, too, will win. They shall never pass, never, never, never!"

THE LESSON OF THE "ODYSSEY"

MARK AVERY had for his teacher in the Church School one of those rare souls whose life is a genuine interpretation of the teachings of the Master. In all sorts of ways the boys had tested him, but they had found him sincere and true, gentle and sympathetic. He was a man of faith and a man of prayer.

Out of his class there had gone, through the years, many strong, stalwart Christian young men, for he had lived his message before them and so they believed and accepted his message. It was nearing a communion time and some of the boys were to join the church. They had asked Mark to join them. He had talked the matter over with his teacher, but somehow he was not satisfied that he wanted to join.

Mark came from a home that was not Christian; from a home that encouraged him little in the higher things. Perhaps that was what made him weigh the question in his own mind. His father was a very successful business man and he should inherit the business. His father believed that one got along better in business by not using Christian principles. If he were to take his father's place, why did he need a belief in God? Could he not make a real success in life without

it? Mr. Lane had said over and over in the classroom that only as they realized their need of God in their lives did they find him a present help. He felt no need, so why should he be looking for help?

He could see how Mr. Lane needed a faith in God, for he had had so many hard things in his own life. His wife had died, his son had been killed in the war. Mr. Lane certainly needed God.

One of Mark's friends was a cripple and could not do the things he longed to do. He would need God to make him patient and resigned. Another was inclined to drink more than he should—so he needed God to help him resist temptation. But he, Mark Avery, was strong and well and happy and wealthy. Why did he need God?

One day, a few weeks after he had had his talk with Mr. Lane, he took his "Odyssey" under his arm and wandered down a little path that led far into the woods. Alone by himself there, he would prepare his review lesson.

And he read these words from the old epic story:

"Saying this, clear-eyed Athena passed away, even as a bird takes its flight. Into his heart she had brought strength and courage, turning his thoughts upon his noble father more than before. As he marked this in his mind, an awe fell on his heart. He knew a God was with him. Straightway he went about his work, godlike himself."

The eyes of the boy left the book and looked far away. "Strength and courage"—the two qualities he

admired more than all others in the people whom he knew. "An awe fell on his heart. He knew a God was with him." Did one lack in courage and strength if they did not know a God was within? If so, then this was one reason why he should want to find God. Of all things, he wanted strength and courage.

"And he went about his work, godlike himself." Perhaps here was really the secret of Mr. Lane's strength of character and courage to face hard things. He was godlike himself because he knew a God was within him.

Once more he read the little passage in the Odyssey lesson. This was a bit of old Greek belief, yet it made them stronger to live right. Was it true today? Did strength and courage and the power to be godlike come from the knowledge of a God within? If Athena could thus help in the olden days, surely the God of whom Mr. Lane had taught them so much could help today. He must find God for his very own so that he, too, like the young man of the Odyssey, could have strength and courage and go out to live godlike himself because of a power within.

So his question was answered by the lesson which he had set out to learn—God was needed in his life.

ON THE MOUNTAIN TOP

ARISTOCLES stood on the very edge of the cliff watching a party of tourists come up the steep sides of Mount Parnassus in Greece. He had been watching them for nearly two hours while his sheep grazed near-by. Soon he would go to the town, for this was his chance to earn a few more drachmas and also to spend some hours with people who came from the country where he longed so much to go—America. Back and forth they zigzagged up the steep mountain sides, past the wonderful olive orchards, then through the old town with its ancient threshing-floor, and then up the rocky hillside. Most of the way the boy could see them in their climb.

"I hope some of them can speak Greek or French," thought Aristocles. "It has been so long since any Americans were here—not since before the war. I have so many questions that I want to ask. I hope some of them will talk to me."

Then he drove his sheep to a more sheltered place and turned them over to the care of another shepherd near-by.

He was close to the road-side when the Americans stopped at the little hotel in Delphi, the town of which they had dreamed ever since leaving far-off America. Aristocles watched their faces and heard their exclama-

tions of delight as they looked far off across mountain and valley. Delphi to him was just home, but they seemed to think it something very, very beautiful. Delphi, to them, was the seat of the old oracle of Apollo in the days gone by, a place that had made history for itself and for Greece.

So he followed them as they visited the museum where many of the sacred relics were kept; then up the Sacred Way, past the ruins of the old temples and treasure houses, over to the Castilian Spring and even to the hill top. He listened eagerly to try to catch, in the few words of English that he knew, what the leader of the party was saying as he told how all this place had been buried for centuries and centuries and had only recently been excavated. To Aristocles this was nothing very wonderful. Why should Americans come so far to see some old piles of stone? It seemed very foolish.

So the boy of fifteen went out under the old olive trees at the close of the afternoon and sat down to think it over. The sight of the automobiles had made him restless and discontented. They had come miles and miles to Delphi, but he must stay right there. He wished he had money to go as far away as they had come.

Suddenly someone touched him on the shoulder, and he turned to find a lady by his side. Earlier in the day she had gone with him to one of the mud huts to see the native women carding and spinning and weaving the wool. It was she who had used the little cup,

made from a leaf, that he had put together at the spring; and it was she who had climbed on the back of his donkey and ridden down the little street. So he felt as if he quite knew her and he welcomed her with a smile. She could speak only a little French and no Greek. He could speak only a little English, so it was fun just to try to talk to each other.

Haltingly he told her of his life in Delphi—the long hours of work picking the olives, tending the sheep, threshing the grain, and many other things. Then, with eyes full of questions, he said:

"And your boys in America—what do they do? When they also have no father, what do they do? Do they ride the donkeys and tend the sheep?"

"Oh, no," she replied. "We have only a few boys who live where there are either donkeys or sheep. Some of our boys work in the great factories, and some of them work on the farms. Some work in stores, but most of our boys who are of your age go to school."

His eyes looked far away across the valleys as he turned quickly about.

"I want to go! I want to go!" he cried. "I want to go far from Delphi and far from Itea. Sometimes I take a donkey-load of olives to the steamer at Itea, and always I want to go on the ship. The mountains shut me in! I want to go very, very far. Our men have sometimes gone to America and they send much money back. Now our men go into the war. But I—I am only a boy and I must stay here and tend sheep and tread the grapes. But I want to go!"

There was a silence between the two, for only too well she knew how useless it was to wish to go. Just to get a living from these steep hillsides was a struggle. What could she say to the boy who wanted to go?

But there came the tramp of a donkey's feet near the brow of the hill. Then there came a donkey over the crest with such great bundles of firewood strapped on his back that it seemed hard to find the little burden-bearer beneath. Back of the load came another donkey, while seated on it was a woman. Her back was bent, her skin was dark, and her face looked very, very tired. But it was full of strength of character and gentleness.

The boy jumped to his feet as the second donkey appeared. His face lighted and he touched the arm of his new friend.

"My mother comes," he said. "She works hard all day. Now she comes to get our supper. She is my good mother."

Together the boy and the lady went to the road and he spoke in Greek to his mother, who had bowed low before the stranger. She brushed the long black hair back from his forehead and smiled as she answered him. Then she passed wearily up the steep road to the little mud house which they called home.

"My mother is glad you are here and glad I can talk to you," he said. "I told her I wanted to stay just a few minutes longer before I helped her, and she says I may." Again his eyes roamed to far-off Itea and the Mediterranean, now tinted with sunset colors. "I want to go," he said again. "I want to go more

than I want anything else in all the world. But mother needs me. Mother works in the fields and does a man's work. And I work hard all day and help her, for she is my good mother. But some day when I am a man and can earn much money to send to her, then I can go from Delphi, from Itea—maybe," and he grasped the hand of his new friend, "maybe I can come to America, your land. Oh, I should love to do that! Now I must stay and help."

"And when you come, perhaps I can show you how beautiful my land can be," said the lady, giving him her hand as she rose to go. "I should like to do that. Good-by. A boy who is good to his mother is on the way to make a good man. Some day, I am sure, you will be able to go and see some of the big world. Good-by."

"Good-by," said the boy. "Please come again to Delphi. I wish I might go with you all in the morning. I shall watch you as you go down the mountain."

Very early in the morning, even before the sun was up, the party went again down the steep mountain-side. The scene about them was one of rare beauty as the day broke over the valley and the sun rose. But the boy far up on the hillside, driving his sheep to the pasture, did not see the little old town of Delphi, nor the old Temple of Apollo, nor even the beauty of the sunrise. He saw only the automobiles as they wound, back and forth, down the steep hillside. His hands were pushing at the bottom of his pockets and often he kicked at one and another object that he passed on

the sheep-trail. He was saying to himself as they went farther and farther from his sight:

"I want to go, too. Oh, I do want to go! But she is my good mother, and I must stay and help now. Some day I can go."

HIS BIBLE LESSON

FOR four Sundays there had been a new teacher in the "Corner Class," and for four Sundays the boys in that class had been giving no trouble to the rest of the school. Mr. Brown, their own teacher, had gone to another state for a time, and had sent in his place this young man who was neither good-looking nor eloquent.

Yet he had held the attention of the boys, and every boy was eager for the next Sunday to come. He knew so much about boys and their problems that they wanted to ask him some more questions. During the last lesson they had been discussing what it meant to be a helper of Christ, and Charles King had been asked to read John 21 : 15-17 before the next Sunday. Then he was supposed to tell the class what he had found there.

It was a new thing for him to study his Bible lesson, but he liked this new teacher and wanted to please him, so on Sunday afternoon he took out his mother's Bible and began to read:

"And Jesus saith to Simon Peter, 'Simon, son of Jonas, lovest thou me more than these?' He saith unto him, 'Yea, Lord, thou knowest that I love thee.' He saith unto him, 'Feed my lambs.' "

A half-hour later when father came in for tea he found Charles still studying his Bible lesson, for he had looked up some references about Peter. He wanted to know more about this man to whom Jesus would say three times, "Lovest thou me?" 'Twas a very interesting story and he rather enjoyed studying it. Father helped a bit and mother helped some more, so that when he had finished he was quite sure that he could tell that story as well as Henry Mead had told the one assigned to him.

Monday morning he was on his way to school when he met a boy whom he disliked very much. He was a foreign boy and Charles was just about to call him a mean name when he heard a voice say:

"Charles, lovest thou me? Then work for me. Show this boy that you love me."

You may be sure that he thought very hard for a minute. Never before had he thought that joining the church on Easter Sunday and taking the name of Christian for his own had meant showing his love for Christ on the street—especially to a foreign boy. But he was very sure that was what Jesus meant when he was talking to Peter. "Feed my lambs" meant "Do a kindness." Of one thing he was very sure—he did love the Christ.

So he called cheerily across the street:

"Oh, John, did you get the hard problem solved all right?"

"No," said the boy. "You know I never had most of the arithmetic that you fellows have had, so now

I just can't do some of these problems. I did my best, but I know I am going to get a scolding and perhaps be put back a year. I am sorry for mother's sake, for it means a lot for her to send me to school."

"Come on across," said Charles. "I can show you this in just a minute, and then after school I'll explain to you what you don't understand. Problems are easy for me, so I am sure I can help you."

So the problem was explained after school, and the old feeling of dislike just seemed to fade away as the American boy came to understand the foreign boy.

On Wednesday the teacher seemed tired and cross, while Charles felt full of mischief. So he was just preparing to tease her and see if he could make tears come into her eyes again, as he had done once before, when he heard a voice say:

"Charles, lovest thou me? Then help to make it easy for one who loves me. Show that you love me."

Oh, oh! This was harder than the first time when the voice had spoken. The boys were waiting for him to begin the fun. Surely one could have some fun even though he was trying to be a Christian. But he had heard the voice, and now it would be hard to have the fun he had planned.

So, instead, he was not only kind himself but he helped others to be kind and lessons were the order of the day instead of mischief. Just as school was out he heard the superintendent say:

"Miss Loran, won't you please stay at home tomorrow and care for your mother? I know how worried

you must be. We shall get along somehow. Charles will help, won't you, sonny?"

And to his delight Miss Loran answered, "Charles has helped all day today and when he helps, all the rest do. Mother is very ill and I thank you for being kind."

Oh, my! How glad he was the voice had spoken to him! It was a thoughtful boy who went along the road to his home that night. He was beginning to understand that even a boy had to show his love for the Christ.

Saturday came and he was to go for a picnic. Mother had promised him lunch for three of his friends, and father had promised to take them early in the morning to a good fishing hole and leave them there. For weeks he had looked forward to this day. But when he looked from the window the rain was coming down in torrents. So he was about as much disappointed as a boy could very well be.

When he went down to breakfast there seemed nothing to do but to take his spite out on the people whom he met. So he said a cross thing to his mother; then he slapped at his brother, and then he was just ready to slam a door as hard as ever he could when he heard a voice say:

"Charles, lovest thou me? Then be kind. Show that you love me."

He stood still for a moment, and then went out of the door and up to his room. There he sat down and reread that part of the book of John again. Three times Jesus had asked Peter if he loved him. Three

times Peter had told him that he did, and three times Jesus had told him to prove it.

Three times this week he had heard a voice saying to him, "Charles, lovest thou me? Then prove it." Surely it meant a lot to have to keep proving that one loved Christ. Long he sat there, thinking more seriously than he had ever thought in all the sixteen years of his life. The teacher had said last Sunday that God still spoke to people through their conscience and now he believed it, for surely he had heard a voice. Perhaps God hadn't really known before that he meant his Easter pledge. One must prove his love by what he did every day.

As he sat in his room thinking about it, he was looking at a picture of the Christ which hung on the walls of his room. It had been given to him at Christmas time and it had helped to make his decision to join the church at Easter time.

His mother's voice sounded from the floor below, asking him to do an errand for her, so he rose to go. But he stopped as he came directly in front of the picture. Then he smiled into the face of the Christ as he said loyally:

"All right. I am ready to prove to you that I love you. I just didn't know before that you wanted me to do it that way. No one had told me about it. I'll try if you will show me the way as you have this week. I'll be glad to try."

So Charles King found the message of his Bible lesson.

THE COURAGE OF A REFUGEE

OUT under the blazing Grecian sun the Armenian refugee camp stood, bare and cheerless. The shelters were only the barracks used by the Canadian soldiers during the war. All about them played the little children with their thin bodies and old faces. Some had little clothing; some were very dirty; all showed lack of food.

Within the camp there was disorder and confusion, for many families must live in the same room. Some had a little furniture which they had brought from their old homes; some had only blankets and clothing given them by their good friends of the American Red Cross. On the face of every mother in the group there were lines of worry and sorrow and toil. Oh, how long it had been since they were first driven from their homes more than three years before!

On the side of one of the huts sat a group of boys thirteen and fourteen years of age. They, too, were refugees with little to do except sit about the huts and talk. They had searched for many hours for work to do in the nearby city, but work was scarce and laborers plenty, so they had been unsuccessful. It was easy to see that the leader of the group was Hotep, an Armenian.

Now Hotep was a study to the Red Cross workers. He had come with his mother to the camp nearly two months before and he had given the workers no end of trouble. He quarreled with the children and tormented them in mean little ways. He stole food when he could find it; he refused to work well when something was found for him to do. He seemed to hate everything and everybody except the group of boys whom he led.

And now a more serious problem had come. A number of the families were to be taken soon to Thrace and placed on little plots of land there. Hotep's mother, with her many children, had been chosen as one of those who should go. But Hotep said no, and trouble was brewing. So he sat on the box near the hut, telling the boys what he would and would not do. Just as he was in the midst of it, a voice called:

"Hotep! Hotep! May I speak with you?"

It was the head nurse from the children's hospital in the camp and Hotep really admired her, though no one would ever have suspected it. He had watched her as she worked over the sick ones in the camp; he admired her sympathy and her skill and her power to endure hard things. So he rose to answer.

She was standing on the step of her little room in the hospital and she drew the boy within.

"I have a little time to myself now, Hotep, and I thought I should like to talk to you. I am much interested in you and your mother. Would you mind telling me a little of what you remember of these last

five years? I should like to know a little about your father. Was he a brave man?"

The boy's face instantly showed a struggle. Should he be stubborn, or should he tell her? Indeed, his father was a brave man, and he had loved him dearly. Perhaps if he should say he couldn't remember or he didn't want to talk about it, as he had told the rest of the workers, she might think he had had a poor father. He sat on the bench thinking it over while she answered a telephone call and by the time she was ready, he had decided to tell her the story. But how should he begin? He was trying to find a way, but when she turned about and offered him some home-made candy from a plate somehow it seemed easy all at once.

"Yes, nurse," he began, "I did have a brave father. He was so strong and so good and so faithful. Nurse, you would have loved my father."

"I am sure I should have liked him very much," said the nurse, "for your mother says you are like him, and I have loved you since the very first day you came."

Hotep dropped his hat and stood staring at the nurse.

"You loved me then, when I was so dirty and ragged? You love me now? How can you, when I have been so mean about the camp? How can you?"

"Because I know you aren't showing your real self," said the nurse. "Your real self is good and strong and brave and faithful, like your father, I am very sure. The boys see it and so you lead them, for boys never follow weak cowards. Often I have wondered why

you hid your real self from me when I had done you no harm and was trying to be kind to your family. You have the makings of a hero, I am sure."

Just then the bell rang and she was called aside. So Hotep had time to think about what she had said. Mother had told her that he was like his father. Well, there was a time when he did try to be just like him, and he and father were good chums. Father had been, and still was, his hero. What was the matter? Why had he been so ugly?

When the nurse came back she found a changed boy waiting for her. Waiting for her to be seated, he said:

"I should like to tell you about father, and then perhaps you can tell me why I have been unlike him."

So he told her of their little home in Armenia before the Turk had come to drive them from it. He told of the dreadful day of the massacre, when nine thousand of the villagers had taken what little they could carry and had fled for their lives. He told of the bravery of his father in defending his mother and his grown-up sister, and how his father had died from the wounds of the Turks. He told of his anguish when they had to leave him by the side of the road, unburied and alone.

For a moment there was silence, and the boy's body shook with sobs as he lived over that dreadful day. Then he told of the death of a brother, the stealing of a sister for a Turkish harem, the long, weary marches in the blistering heat, and the long struggle of the little family just to keep themselves alive, as they had been

driven here and there, from one place to another, for more than three years.

"And even now we have nothing," he said. "We have to live in a room with twenty other families. All the space we can have is marked off by a little white line. What kind of a home is that? Everything we have to eat has to be given to us. I haven't been to school. What chance have I in the world? Life is not fair. It isn't fair that some boys should have all and some should have none. I hate life. Why should I try? What is there to try for? What is the use, nurse? What is the use of trying when you have nothing in life to look forward to?"

The eyes of the boy flashed as he asked his questions. For answer the nurse bent nearer to him and said:

"No, Hotep, life doesn't seem fair in these hard days. But, sonny, as long as you live you must live with yourself. Do you think you always want to live with a coward? Your father preferred to live with a hero, and you could be like him if you would. Just now you are surely playing the part of a coward in the camp, for you do not do that which you know to be right. Think it over, Hotep, and then come back and talk it over with me. The bell is ringing for the children's milk and I must go. Stay as long as you like here in my room."

Then she put the plate of candy close beside him on the table and left him alone.

At the twilight hour she was sitting to rest after her

long, hard day, when there came a knock at her door and Hotep came in.

"Nurse," he said, "what would a hero do if he were I?"

"What do you think he would do?" she asked kindly.

"I think he would have to go to Thrace and take father's place and try to make a home for mother. But I hate a farm and I hate the country, and I don't want to go. You aren't going to ask me to go, are you?" cried the boy.

"I am going to ask you to do nothing," said the nurse. "What you do will be only what you yourself choose to do. I wonder, Hotep, if doing just the things one wants to do is the way a hero is made? Do you want to be a hero?"

"Yes, I do. I really do. I want to live with a hero, for I hate a coward. I want to be like father," said the boy, looking her frankly in the eye.

"Then come in and let us see what you want to do," and she drew him again into the little room. She talked to him of the possibilities of making the home in Thrace; of the happiness which he could bring back into the face of his mother; of the safety he could give to his sisters if they had a home of their own. Then she told him of the kindness of the Red Cross in saving the life of the family so that they could all grow up together. She showed him how much easier it would be for him to grow up clean and strong and good, away from all the temptations of the city.

And as she talked he knew that she had meant what

she said earlier in the day. She really did love him and wanted to help him. Her hand on his shoulder seemed to fill him with courage and he wished it might stay there to keep him strong. There was a big, big lump in his throat and a big, big resolve in his heart when he said good-night to her and went to the dreary hut to sleep.

Two days later, very early in the morning, a long line of ox-carts drew up in front of the refugee camp. One by one, they were filled with the few belongings of refugee families, and on the top of the loads climbed the women and children. Oh, it was a pitiful sight as they prepared to go to their new home in Thrace! What was the future to bring? Only God knew whether it was to be happiness or suffering.

And the nurse, coming for the day, saw, leaning far out over one load, a boy of fourteen.

"I was afraid you wouldn't get here," he said. "I am going to Thrace, and I am going to make good. I am going to live with a hero. Good-by, nurse. I am glad I came to see you. Thank you for helping me to see."

"A boy begins to be a hero the very moment he begins to be strong and brave," she answered with a glad smile. "Good-by, Sir Hero. Good luck to you! I am so glad you and I are friends! I shall write to you soon. Good-by, sonny!"

Slowly the ox-carts started their long, weary journey, and a boy on the load was waving first to the gang whom he had led and then to the nurse whom he loved.

"She called me sonny, and she called me hero, and she said she would write to me. Guess those three things are worth going to Thrace to get," he said. "I wish I had known her before."

And the nurse, watching the carts turn the bend in the road, said softly to herself:

"Brave little Hotep! You have won your first hard fight. You have the makings of a hero, even though you are only an Armenian refugee. It is a long, hard road that is ahead of you, but it is the way that will make you like your father—a hero."

HIS PENANCE

THE city was guarded closely; the shutters of the houses were closed; the streets were empty and desolate, for a giant was abroad in the land.

He was very strong and powerful, yet no one saw him. He was feared by both great and small, yet he carried no sword or gun. He came at will into houses of rich and poor, and none could stop him.

Wherever he went there was sorrow and death. And the call had gone out through the land for help in conquering him. So from north and south and east and west the volunteers came. Some were old and some were young; some were men and some were women; but all were eager to help, just as in the days of the knights.

Some called the giant "Plague"; some called him "Epidemic"; all called him "Sickness." For weeks he had held reign in the city of Memphis, and the country round was filled with fear and suffering as the inhabitants of the city grew less and less in number.

One day there came to the doctor in charge a strange-looking man. His hair was cut very close to his head. When he walked, one could hear the shuffling of his feet. When spoken to, he answered with his eyes upon the ground. His clothes were ragged and dirty.

The doctor supposed him to be a man who needed help, so he asked him what he needed; but instead of asking for anything, he said huskily:

"Doctor, I want to nurse the sick. I know how."

"But I cannot use you," said the doctor, turning away.

"Please give me a chance to help somebody," pleaded the man. "I don't care where it is or how sick they are. I want to nurse somebody. Try me for one week, and then if you don't like me you can dismiss me. If you do, you can pay me. Please try me."

Something in his voice made the doctor realize that the young man needed the work, so he said:

"Well, you may try. Go down to the hospital and tell them to clean you up and give you clothes. Then report for duty."

So he went to work. In the parts of the city where the fever raged the hardest he was found. The doctors marveled at his strength and endurance. He was most skillful and showed a knowledge of medicine. He seemed to be never weary of helping those who needed him.

During the day he cared for those who were paying him; at night he would steal away into the slum sections and care for the neglected ones. Over and over and over he gave the cup of cold water to those who needed it, and all through the city he came to be known and honored.

So weeks and weeks went by until he, too, took the dreadful sickness and died. The city, as a man,

mourned the death of their friend, and wished they knew where his friends might be found, that they might send the body home to them. But he had told no one from whence he had come or where his home had been.

So they planned to bury him in the city which he had helped so much. Then when the body was made ready for burial, they learned a secret which he had guarded so carefully. On his arm they found a deep red mark—the sign of a convicted felon. In a box in his room they found all the money that he had earned, put away in a box for the needy of the city. He had given himself and his means to show that he was still worthy of trust.

So he changed his sentence. The courts had branded him a felon. But he had been given a chance to try again, and he had died a victor over himself and a friend of the needy.

THE SPHINX

IT WAS nearly midnight and the African desert was very still, except for the place where twelve tents were pitched and a little group of Arabs were preparing a sumptuous supper. In the largest of the tents a long table was set, and the great plates of watermelon and grapes looked very tempting to the passerby.

In the bright moonlight the men moved back and forth, seeing that all was ready for their guests. Their black robes flapped about their feet as they walked. The brightly colored scarfs about their heads made a patch of color here and there on the scene.

Only one boy was among them—Mohammed, a boy of seventeen, the son of the dragoman who was bringing the American party to camp for the night on the desert. His face was strong and resolute. His bearing was that of a gentleman.

On his head he wore the red fez, but his clothing was European. He wore a light pongee suit, carefully pressed and spotless. He must look his very best, for the leader of this party was the man of all men whom his father delighted to honor; he was the man whom his father often called his "American brother." When the leader had been in Egypt before, Mohammed was

a little boy. Now he must see that the boy had grown into a young man of whom his father could be proud.

So he wandered from tent to tent, lighting a candle here, smoothing a pillow there, and thinking of the glad surprise there would be when the party should arrive and find all this comfort on the desert.

"Ah!" he said as he looked once more into the dining-tent. "Only twice before has this tent been used—when the Khedive journeyed in father's care, and again when the Prince of Saxony was here. How beautiful it is with all its rare Egyptian patchwork lining! Father loves to honor the Americans. I wonder if I shall like them also. Perhaps they can tell me some of the things about which I am thinking. I wish I knew what I should be five years from now."

A sound of wheels and a sand cart appeared, closely followed by ten or more donkeys. Then a dozen camels slowly brought up the rear, swaying along with their tired riders, all eager to dismount. For many miles all had ridden across the desert in the moonlight, so the little tents looked wonderfully attractive to them now.

Mohammed listened to them as they looked into the tents and wondered how so many things could have been made ready for them. He listened to their happy laughter as they gathered about the table, but he kept outside in the moonlight. Father had said that some were ministers and professors. So, boylike, he was afraid of them.

He listened as they planned for the trip of the next

morning, and, one by one, went to their tents. Then his heart gave a bound of delight. His father was telling a small group of the Americans that he would gladly walk with them the half mile to the Sphinx so that they could see it by the moonlight. Here was his chance. He, too, would go.

So, although the clock had already struck an hour after midnight, the little party started across the sands —the father, the boy, four strong Arabs and, in their care, three ladies and a young man of the party. Ahead of them the Great Pyramid reared its head with two smaller ones near it. The night was almost as light as day. The walk was one long to be remembered.

And as they went, Mohammed found himself telling them of his life in, and love for, the mission school in Cairo; of the kindness of the teachers and the inspiration which their lives gave to him; of his desire to be a leader some day. How easy it was to talk to them! Mohammed was very happy.

And so they came, all too quickly, to the Great Pyramid and then to its neighbor, the Sphinx. The moonlight played over its face, and the great figure seemed ready to speak. Far away in the distance hired mourners were wailing for the dead, and their cries added to the weirdness of the scene. From the desert nearby two other Arabs appeared like ghosts in the night. They were guardians of the desert treasures. Everywhere there was quiet and loneliness near the Sphinx. In every direction one saw only sand and the massive piles of the pyramids.

Awed by the scene, the visitors sat down on the sand. It was beautiful beyond description; it was one of the rare things that would come in a lifetime. For a long time no one spoke. Finally the father leaned toward the visitors and said:

"It is very, very old now—one of the oldest monuments in the world, and it will last forever. It is well made, of good material, and on sure foundations, so it must stand. You are fortunate in seeing our Sphinx at its best—in the moonlight. But you are tired and we must return to the tents."

The night grew old and the chill of the desert fell on the visitors and their guides as they recrossed the desert. Mohammed was telling of his desire to make his life count in the better day in Egypt when his race should have good schools and all be required to get an education.

"Do you think I can do it?" he asked. "Can I be an honor to my race? How can I get ready? It seems as if it were asking much to have father keep me in school so long, though he wants me to go. Is there a better way?"

For answer one of the Americans pointed back to the Sphinx standing steady and distinct in the moonlight, and said:

"Let your father's own words answer your question, Mohammed. 'It is well made, of good material, and on sure foundation, so it must stand.' What is true of the Sphinx is doubly true in the life of a boy. Good health and a trained mind will make your life live

forever, if you choose to use your power for that which is highest and best in life. Look again behind you. The old Sphinx looks toward the new day. Keep your mind fixed on the future and build carefully in mind and body and soul. Careless work is soon destroyed."

"Thank you," answered the boy. "Study is easy when there is a reason for it. I will get ready."

The camp was reached and soon all were asleep in the cozy little tents, while the moon shone into the faces of the Arabs who guarded them so carefully. In the distance the dear old Sphinx looked for the sunrise as it has looked for four thousand years, and waited for others to whom it could, by its age and its strength and its beauty, give, as it had given to Mohammed, strength and inspiration to build carefully and for the future.

And who could ask for a greater mission?

THE SAFE CHOICE

"CHOOSE your ideal and I will show you a man of your choice," said the guardian spirit as she talked with the boys in the way.

"Give me strength," said one. And he saw the prize-fighter in all his vulgarity, amusing the crowds. He was strong.

"Give me courage," said another. And he saw the burglar flashing his lantern into the safe in the very block with the officers of the law. He was not afraid.

"Give me fame," said another. And he saw the picture of the man whose name was on every tongue because he had caused a world war. He was famous.

"Give me skill," said another. And he saw the forger making the bank notes that should defy the government and bring trouble and shame. He was skillful.

"Give me mental ability," said another. But he saw the man whose mind planned the use of the submarine and poisonous gases to cause untold suffering. He could think well.

"Give me gold," said another. And he saw a lonely miser, hated by all, yet with gold in abundance. He had gold.

"Give me business ability," said another. And he

saw the head of a great corporation cornering the wheat, doing that which would cause many to be hungry and die.

"Give me the ideal of Christ," said another.

"And what might that be?" said all the boys in unison.

For answer they saw a picture of the Christ. He was young and stalwart. And below it was written these words:

"And Jesus grew in wisdom and stature, and in favor with God and man."

"Courage and strength and mind and skill are included, you see," said the spirit. "Money and fame and gold may come, but do not always. To grow in mind and body and to keep friends with God and Man —that is the ideal of the Christ. It has been the choice of the world's greatest men. It is still the choice of those that are thoughtful. It is greater than all other choices. It is the safe choice."

Then the guardian spirit went on her way, but the picture remained with the boys. It was worth while to know what choice might include all the rest. It was a good thing to remember what choice great men had made.

THE END

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